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## Goals of the *Africanus Journal*

The *Africanus Journal* is an academic, multilingual journal. Its goals are to promote:

- a. the mission and work of the members and mentors of the Africanus Guild Ph.D. Research Program of Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary, based on the Boston campus (the Center for Urban Ministerial Education [CUME]).
- b. the principles of the Africanus Guild (evangelical orthodox Christian men and women who are multicultural, multiracial, urban-oriented, studying a Bible without error in a cooperative way).

Scholarly papers may be submitted normally by those who are in a Th.M., D.Min., Ph.D. program or have a Th.M., D.Min., Ph.D., Ed.D., or equivalent degree.

Current publications authored by professors and students of Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary, Boston Campus (Center for Urban Ministerial Education) are featured interspersed throughout the journal.

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## Life of Julius Africanus

Julius Africanus was probably born in Jerusalem, many scholars think around A.D. 200. Africanus was considered by the ancients as a man of consummate learning and sharpest judgment (*Ante-Nicene Fathers* 6:128). He was a pupil of Heracles, distinguished for philosophy and other Greek learning, in Alexandria, Egypt around A.D. 231–233. In A.D. 220/226, he performed some duty in behalf of Nicopolis (formerly Emmaus) in Palestine. Later he likely became bishop of Emmaus (Eusebius, *History*, VI.xxxi.2). Origen calls him “a beloved brother in God the Father, through Jesus Christ, His holy Child” (*Letter from Origen to Africanus* 1). Fellow historian Eusebius distinguishes him as “no ordinary historian” (*History*, I. vi.2). Eusebius describes the five books of *Chronologies* as a “monument of labor and accuracy” and cites extensively from his harmony of the evangelists’ genealogies (*History*, VI. xxxi. 1–3). Africanus was a careful historian who sought to defend the truth of the Bible. He is an ancient example of meticulous, detailed scholarship which is historical, biblical, truthful, and devout.

Even though Eusebius describes Africanus as the author of the *Kestoi*, Jerome makes no mention of this (ANF 6:124). The author of *Kestoi* is surnamed Sextus, probably a Libyan philosopher who arranged a library in the Pantheon at Rome for the Emperor. The *Kestoi* was probably written toward the end of the 200s. It was not written by a Christian since it contains magical incantations (*Oxyrhynchus Papyri* III.412).

The Greek text of Africanus’ writings may be found in Martinus Josephus Routh, *Reliquiae sacrae* II (New York: Georg Olms Verlag, 1974 [1846]), 225–309, and Martin Wallraff, Umberto Roberto, Karl Pinggéra, eds., William Adler, trans., *Iulius Africanus Chronographiae: The Extant Fragments*, *Die Griechischen Christlichen Schriftsteller* 15 (New York: Walter de Gruyter, 2007).

The extant writings of Julius Africanus may be found in vol. 1, no 1, April 2009 edition of the *Africanus Journal*.

## Other Front Matter

### *Editorial team*

Jennifer Creamer, Mark G. Harden, Matthew Mascioli, Alvin Padilla, Seong Hyun Park, Nicole Rim, John Runyon, Patrick Smith, Aida Besançon Spencer, William David Spencer

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### *Summary of Content*

The first two articles are concerned with people who ably use literary techniques in their writings and ministry: C. S. Lewis and the Apostle Paul, then follows a practical article on teaching at the graduate school level in a seminary. Reviews of several books follow.



# THE AFRICANUS GUILD



L to R: William David Spencer, Joo Yun Kim, Dae Sung Kim, Mark Harden, Quonekuia Day, Jennifer Creamer, Aida Besancon Spencer

*“The Africanus Guild provides an excellent opportunity to study with scholars who affirm the inerrancy of Scripture at the doctoral level. My mentors continually challenge me to greater thoroughness in research and clarity of expression in writing. The Africanus Guild has given me the support I need to become a better researcher, writer and teacher in a multicultural context.”*

–Jennifer Creamer

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# C. S. Lewis and the Problem of Grief

ROBERT BOENIG

An all too common misconception about academics is that they live in a purely cerebral world, that theirs is a life of the mind rather than a life of the heart, replete with ideas yet lacking experience. The “ivory tower” cliché follows them. Richard Attenborough’s 1993 film *Shadowlands*, which brought C. S. Lewis to the Academy Awards ceremony, certainly looks at him that way. Its opening scene, for instance, which depicts a dinner at Magdalen College, Oxford in 1952, assembles a group of Lewis’s fellow dons so they can chide him for writing children’s books without knowing any children. Pressed hard on this matter, all Anthony Hopkins, who plays Lewis, can say, pointing lamely towards his older brother Warnie, a guest at the dinner and played by Edward Hardwicke, is “My brother was a child once.”

Though references to *The Lion, the Witch, and the Wardrobe* wander in and out of the 1993 *Shadowlands*, the movie’s main point is about a more serious issue than Lewis’s presumption of writing about children when he lacks the experience of living with them.<sup>1</sup> It is rather Lewis’s theorizing about why God allows pain and suffering in the world, confidently telling those who attend his lectures that God uses suffering as a sculptor uses the blows of a chisel to perfect his creation. *Shadowlands* is about Lewis’s relationship with Joy Davidman Gresham, the woman who would become his wife—how he eventually falls in love with her and suffers emotionally with her as she gradually succumbs to cancer. When the 1993 movie nears its end, we see Hopkins as Lewis weep desperately over her loss, inconsolable in his efforts to console her son Douglas. We realize that he now knows suffering firsthand through experience and that it has shown him how hollow his confident academic theorizing has been.

The 1993 *Shadowlands* is a profound and compelling movie, but I would like to take issue with this thesis. Lewis was, in the words of the Bible, “acquainted with grief,”<sup>2</sup> experientially as well as rationally, and the facts of his life together with how he deals in his writings with pain, particularly the intense emotional suffering of grief, argue to the contrary. More important than defending Lewis against those who would lock him up in an ivory tower is my second objective—to suggest that his insights about grief are useful in the context of pastoral care and counseling.

Anyone’s lifetime will of course involve painful experiences, Lewis’s no exception. What was exceptional about his life is that he recorded so much of it in his writings. He wrote an autobiography, *Surprised by Joy*,<sup>3</sup> for a time as a young man kept a diary,<sup>4</sup> and wrote many letters which have

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1 This allegation is only partially true. Though Lewis had no children of his own, he had a number of godchildren, including Lucy Barfield and Sarah Neylan, with whom he made efforts to keep in touch, treating his godfatherly duties seriously. He lived with Mrs. Jane Moore and her daughter Maureen for many years; Maureen was twelve years old when the domestic arrangements began. In 1940 his household accepted a number of children evacuated from London during the Nazi blitz—the fictional circumstance that in *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe* brings the Pevensy children to the home of Professor Kirke. One of these evacuated children remained Lewis’s lifelong friend; she is Jill Freud (née Jill Flewett), an actress who married Clement Freud, one of Sigmund Freud’s grandsons. Jill Freud performed in a number of well known movies during the years, including the 2003 romantic comedy *Love Actually*. There is some speculation that she served as the model for Lucy Pevensy, though that is probably not the case, since she was already thirteen years old when she entered Lewis’s household. Lucy Pevensy is more closely connected with Lucy Barfield, Lewis’s friend Owen Barfield’s daughter and dedicatee of *The Lion, the Witch, and the Wardrobe*. Lewis also dedicated each volume of the *Chronicles of Narnia* except the last to different children of his acquaintance. The rest are: Mary Clare Havard (*Prince Caspian*); Geoffrey Barfield (*Voyage of the Dawn Treader*); Nicholas Hardie (*The Silver Chair*); his stepsons David and Douglas Gresham (*The Horse and his Boy*); and the Kilmer children (grandchildren of the World War I poet Joyce Kilmer, *The Magician’s Nephew*).

2 Isaiah 53:3.

3 C. S. Lewis, *Surprised by Joy: The Shape of My Early Life* (New York: Harcourt, Brace and World, 1955).

4 Walter Hooper, ed., *All My Road Before Me: The Diary of C. S. Lewis, 1922-1927* (New York: Harcourt, Brace,

survived, now comprising approximately 4,000 pages in the three-volume *Collected Letters of C. S. Lewis*.<sup>5</sup> Though all these works can be reticent about Lewis's feelings and emotions, they give us access to the personal events of his life as well as to his thoughts about Christian doctrine, spirituality, and literature. Among his life's events, two particularly strike me as important for understanding Lewis's experiential rather than rational exposure to pain and suffering—his service as a second lieutenant in World War I and the death of his mother Flora from cancer when he was nine years old.

A native of Belfast in what is now Northern Ireland, Lewis had no obligation to serve Great Britain during World War I, but he chose to do so nevertheless. After training at Oxford, he was shipped to France, arriving in the warzone on his nineteenth birthday, 29 November 1917. That was the month imperial Russia succumbed to its Bolshevik Revolution and exited the war, freeing Germany from its eastern front.<sup>6</sup> America had entered the war in April of 1917, but its armed forces were unprepared for significant combat duties until a year later. Germany thus launched a major offensive in March 1918 in hopes of winning the war before America would tip the balance in the favor of the British and the French. By all accounts, the spring of 1918 was one of the most brutal periods of that brutal war. Lewis was in the thick of it.<sup>7</sup> On April 15, 1918, he was seriously wounded by the shortfall of a British artillery shell that killed two men standing next to him—his sergeant, Harry Ayers, and a friend from another company in his battalion, Lawrence Johnson.<sup>8</sup> Lewis was evacuated to a hospital near the front, where his brother Warnie, serving in the British army's supply corps, visited him. Subsequently he was sent to a hospital in England, where he slowly recuperated. The surgeons who first treated him left fragments of the shell in his chest, deeming the operation to remove them too dangerous. Over a decade later, the wound had become so painful that Lewis underwent successful surgery to remove them. The wound, of course, caused intense literal pain, but there was also the grief of losing a friend and his sergeant, whom he describes in *Surprised by Joy* as “almost like a father.”<sup>9</sup>

The death of Lewis's mother doubtless occasioned a different order of grief. In February 1908, an operation revealed she had cancer; after a subsequent operation on 23 August of that year, she died. Lewis's father Albert was an eccentric man, and his relationship with his two sons was often strained. Flora Lewis had served as a buffer between her sons and her husband. An accomplished mathematician, she had shared the duties of educating Lewis with a governess, and without her husband, who was neurotically averse to travel, she accompanied her children on vacations. She had been very much involved in the life of the young C. S. Lewis, and suddenly she was gone. A mother's serious illness and early death, as I know from experience, is devastating for her child. Efforts by other family members to soften its severity by concealing it most often do more harm than good. Forty-seven years after her death, Lewis was still so affected by his grief that he poignantly weaves his mother's illness into the sixth Chronicle of Narnia, *The Magician's Nephew*.

In the earliest version of *Shadowlands*, a 1985 TV movie starring Joss Ackland as Lewis and Claire Bloom as Joy Gresham, William Nicholson, the author of its screenplay, has Lewis mention *The Magician's Nephew* and its connection with his mother's death in a letter to Joy before he meets her in person. Later in the 1985 movie, Lewis encounters Joy's son Douglas, who is worrying about his mother's deteriorating health, reading the book; he responds by re-reading it himself, later commenting to Warnie, who is played by David Waller, that Joy's sons are “. . . about the same age as you and I were [when our mother died].” As we shall see, *The Magician's Nephew* plays an even more important role

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Jovanovich, 1991).

5 Walter Hooper, ed., *The Collected Letters of C. S. Lewis*, 3 volumes (New York: Harper Collins, 2004-2007).

6 Known as the “October Revolution” because Russia still followed the old Julian Calendar, the Russian Revolution actually began on November 7th according to the modern calendar that we follow today and was long in place by 1917 elsewhere in Europe.

7 For Lewis's war experience, see K. J. Gilchrist, *A Morning After War: C. S. Lewis and WWI* (New York: Peter Lang, 2005).

8 Gilchrist, *Morning After War*, p. 125.

9 Lewis, *Surprised by Joy*, p. 196.

in the 1989 stage production of *Shadowlands*, which debuted in Plymouth in 1989. Nicholson, author of each version of *Shadowlands*, also imports into the 1989 play allusions to Lewis's *The Problem of Pain*, his theological explanation of why God allows suffering to happen. The 1993 movie erases all references to *The Magician's Nephew* while retaining from the play the allusions to *The Problem of Pain*, a book much easier to use as evidence of Lewis's overly cerebral attitude towards suffering than *The Magician's Nephew*. In *The Problem of Pain*, Lewis advances the idea that God uses suffering to turn his creatures away from the illusory goods of earthly life. Lewis's dominating metaphor is suffering as God's "megaphone to rouse a deaf world."<sup>10</sup> The implication of the 1993 *Shadowlands* movie is that the sufferer might be in too much pain to appreciate the metaphor.

But even in a book as analytical as *The Problem of Pain*, Lewis occasionally lets a different persona appear—one who reveals an experiential and emotional involvement with suffering. Here is a passage where this other Lewis makes his longest appearance in the book:

You would like to know how I behave when I am experiencing pain, not writing books about it. You need not guess, for I will tell you; I am a great coward. But what is that to the purpose? When I think of pain—of anxiety that gnaws like fire and loneliness that spreads out like a desert, and the heartbreaking routine of monotonous misery, or again of dull aches that blacken our whole landscape or sudden nauseating pains that seem already intolerable and then are suddenly increased . . . If I knew any way of escape I would crawl through sewers to find it.<sup>11</sup>

A less obvious example than this is even more significant. Here is a sentence from *The Problem of Pain* which at first glance is cerebral, analytical, and unemotional: "Now pain, like the other evils, may of course recur because the cause of the first pain (disease, or an enemy) is still operative: but pain has no tendency, in its own right, to proliferate."<sup>12</sup> Where Lewis's experiential persona peeps through is in the sentence's parenthesis: for "disease" read his mother's cancer, and for "an enemy" read the German soldiers Lewis faced in World War I.

Lewis inverts the ratio of cerebral and experiential in his book *A Grief Observed*,<sup>13</sup> which charts the turbulent emotions he experienced while his wife was dying. It comprises a cry from the heart during which Lewis allows himself to express his anger towards God, even trying out, though rejecting, the label for God, "Cosmic Sadist." But *A Grief Observed* is mainly a revisiting of the conclusions Lewis came to in *The Problem of Pain*. In the later book he foregrounds his emotions and experiences rather than keeping them in the background, as was the case in *The Problem of Pain*. It is significant that he does not reject his earlier ideas, just recasts them into a new mold. The title of *A Grief Observed* reminds us, however, that the emotional Lewis has not totally replaced the cerebral Lewis who had written *The Problem of Pain*. The word "observed" distances Lewis as the book's author from the anguished Lewis we encounter in its pages, for observing is passive and uninvolved, the proper role of a scholar. Perhaps uncomfortable with the impact of his emotions on his audience, who had become accustomed to his defending rather than accusing God, Lewis first published the book under a pseudonym he had occasionally used early in his career, "N. W. Clerk." The initials stand for the Old English words *nat hwylc*, "he knows not which," while "clerk" here retains its original meaning of "scholar."

Lewis's persona Digory, who will grow up to be a "clerk," is not a detached observer in *The Magician's Nephew*. Instead, he is a very emotional participant in the familial tragedy that is unfolding about him. We first encounter him while he is crying over the illness that threatens to take his mother's life. His new friend Polly first considers chiding him for "blubbing,"<sup>14</sup> then, when informed of his

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10 C. S. Lewis, *The Problem of Pain* (New York: Macmillan, 1969), p. 93.

11 Lewis, *Problem of Pain*, p. 105.

12 Lewis, *Problem of Pain*, p. 116.

13 C. S. Lewis, *A Grief Observed* (1963; New York: Bantam, 1976).

14 C. S. Lewis, *The Magician's Nephew* (1955; New York: Collier Books, 1971), p. 2.



circumstances, tries to comfort him. He is of an age with the nine-year old Lewis, grieving over his own mother; like Lewis, he too grows up to be a professor—the Professor Kirke who owns the wardrobe that becomes the portal through which the evacuated Pevensy children escape from war torn Britain into Narnia. Realizing that the mortal illness of a mother unites Lewis and Digory, William Nicholson invests the 1989 *Shadowlands* play with more references to *The Magician's Nephew* than he had in the 1985 TV movie. In the scene where Joy and Douglas first meet Lewis, Douglas has brought along to be autographed his copy of *The Magician's Nephew*, not the more famous *The Lion, the Witch, and the Wardrobe*.<sup>15</sup> This, of course, is an anachronism, for *The Magician's Nephew* was published in 1955, three years after the initial meeting between Lewis and Douglas takes place. Near the end of this scene, Lewis asks Douglas if he remembered the choice Digory faces when he is tempted—and fails his temptation—to ring a magic bell which would awaken the witch Jadis from an enchanted sleep. As we will see, moral choice is for Lewis central to the grieving process. When Joy first visits Lewis at his home, she confronts him about his overly cerebral analysis of the problem of pain, quoting his line about pain as God's "megaphone,"<sup>16</sup> before bluntly asking, "Jack, have you ever really been hurt?"<sup>17</sup> Lewis immediately responds by sharing his emotional experience: "I have been really hurt . . . That was when my mother died."<sup>18</sup> Lewis, however, soon backs away from the emotion, deflecting the conversation into another direction by asking Douglas if he'd like some dessert.<sup>19</sup> Later, as Joy lies in her hospital room in pain, Douglas arrives carrying his copy of *The Magician's Nephew*. Warnie mentions this, and Lewis reveals to the stage play's audience a significant detail about the book's plot: "The boy travels to Narnia, and picks a magic apple, and brings it back to his dying mother, and makes her well again."<sup>20</sup> When Lewis and Joy are re-married by a priest while she lies apparently dying in her hospital room, Douglas mimics Digory's action by making believe he picks an imaginary apple and then pretends to give it to his mother.<sup>21</sup>

Though Nicholson himself revised his earlier versions into a screenplay for the 1993 *Shadowlands* movie, he erases these references to *The Magician's Nephew*, substituting references to *The Lion, the Witch, and the Wardrobe* instead. Though Anthony Hopkins's Lewis does mention at one point the death of his mother, the shared grief between Douglas and Lewis is nevertheless muted. Also muted, even in the stage play, is the point of Digory's plucking the apple. *The Magician's Nephew* actually presents Digory with two opportunities from two different trees to pluck a magic apple to heal his mother. Having wandered into the newly created Narnia (and followed by the witch Jadis, who brings evil into that world), Digory witnesses the miracle of creation and determines that there must be a magic fruit there to heal his mother. He approaches Aslan to inquire about this, but Aslan instead sends him on a mission to an Eden-like garden far away, so he can pluck the apple not for his mother's sake but rather to protect Narnia from Jadis. Aslan tells him to bring an apple back from the garden so it may be planted in Narnia to grow into a tree of protection, which, while alive, will bar Jadis from taking possession of that world. This Digory does, but not before encountering Jadis in the garden, where she tempts him to steal the apple and take it back to his mother instead of giving it to Aslan. With the greatest of difficulty Digory somehow withstands the temptation and presents the apple to Aslan, who rewards him for his un-Adamlike faithfulness by allowing him to pluck a subsequent apple from the tree, magically already matured and bearing fruit, to heal his mother. In the midst of his grief, in other words, Digory must face a moral choice that is agonizing in its difficulty.

Lewis's book *The Great Divorce* comprises his fullest treatment of moral dilemma as a spiritual path. Its title is a riposte to the English Romantic poet William Blake, who wrote a piece entitled "The

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15 William Nicholson, *Shadowlands* (New York: Penguin, 1991), pp. 12-21.

16 Nicholson, *Shadowlands*, p. 26.

17 Nicholson, *Shadowlands*, p. 27.

18 Nicholson, *Shadowlands*, p. 27.

19 Nicholson, *Shadowlands*, p. 28.

20 Nicholson, *Shadowlands*, p. 62.

21 Nicholson, *Shadowlands*, pp. 72-3.



Marriage of Heaven and Hell.” For Lewis, there cannot be such a marriage, for, once resolved, moral dilemmas insure their separation. The plot of *The Great Divorce* is simple, though its moral theology is not. A busload of residents of the dingy city which is Hell take a ride to the garden-like outskirts of Heaven, where they are met by “Bright People”—relatives, friends, or acquaintances who have journeyed from the mountains of Heaven to invite them to stay. Each of the “Ghosts” from Hell is presented with a choice to stay or go back, and most find flimsy though for them compelling reasons to return to Hell. One of the choices involves intense grief.<sup>22</sup> A Ghost named Pam meets her brother, whose name is Reginald, one of the Bright People, and tells him she is willing to stay in Heaven only if she can resume her earthly relationship with her son Michael, who had predeceased her. Her reaction to his death before her own involved her neglect of her husband and daughter and her idolizing (in almost a biblical sense) of her dead son. She reacts with judgmental anger when her surviving loved ones move through their own grief at a different pace than she does hers. Reginald explains that she is not yet spiritually strong enough even to see Michael, but she will in time be able to do so, though she cannot engulf him in the unhealthy and overly possessive love which characterized her earthly relationship with him. As they wander away, it is clear that Pam will make the wrong choice, demanding that Michael be given to her immediately, even if it involves her bringing him with her back to Hell.

Note that Pam and Michael invert the pattern of *The Magician’s Nephew* and Lewis’s own life, for here a bereaved mother grieves for her son, not a son for his mother. It is inappropriate for us to hierarchize different griefs. That of a bereaved parent is not by nature greater or less painful than other griefs, only different. But it does overturn the biological timing of death, for we expect children to outlive their parents, not the other way around. Pam, however, hierarchizes the bond of love between mother and son and, consequently, the grief the son’s death occasions as the highest, trumping all other loves and griefs. As part of his efforts to save her, Reginald seeks to correct her misconceptions. “You exist as Michael’s mother,” he says, “because you first exist as God’s creation. That relation is older and closer. He also loves. He also has suffered.”<sup>23</sup>

Lewis has written himself into his own book, transforming himself into one of the Ghosts. The Bright Person who meets him is the late Victorian clergyman and writer George MacDonald, whose own books profoundly influenced Lewis’s spiritually. MacDonald assumes the role of guide and teacher in *The Great Divorce*, commenting on the exchange between Pam and Reginald after Lewis’s persona asks him if one could dare to counsel a bereaved mother if one were not bereaved oneself. MacDonald’s response picks up on Reginald’s assertion that God is also a sufferer: “No, no, Son,” he explains to Lewis, “that’s no office of yours. . . . When your own heart’s been broken it will be time for you to think of talking.”<sup>24</sup> The experience of grief, in other words, is the ground of valid counsel.

The phrase “the problem of grief” in the title of this essay has more than one meaning. It is, of course, a narrowing of the title of Lewis’s book *The Problem of Pain*: grief, not so much physical or other emotional pain, is my essay’s focus. There is also a problem with people’s presumption that Lewis was an academic without experience of grief until the death of his wife in 1960, only three years before his own death. This is plainly not true. The third meaning, the one to which we will now turn, is that grief is difficult to address in pastoral care and counseling—a problem for both counselor and bereaved alike. I suggest that Lewis’s insights, described above, can help solve this facet of the problem of grief. What can we learn from him that has practical value?

First, as we have just seen, is what George MacDonald tells Lewis’s persona—that the one who has not experienced the pain of grief has little ground on which to counsel someone who has. As Lewis himself says in a letter to his friend Leo Baker, who was seriously ill, “Beyond wishing you well

22 C. S. Lewis, *The Great Divorce* (New York: Macmillan, 1946), pp. 90-6.

23 Lewis, *Great Divorce*, p. 92.

24 Lewis, *Great Divorce*, p. 97.

... almost anything said from a well man to a sick man seems an impertinence.”<sup>25</sup> Sorrowing for the loss of one’s health is, of course, a species of grief. But the problem is that a pastor is at times called to counsel someone who is suffering from a grief beyond her or his own experience—the death of a child, for instance. Simply listening with empathy and love is appropriate in this instance. People suffering from grief do not often talk to others about it, expecting a quick solution; articulating their pain is often their sole motive. Trained pastoral counselors are familiar with this and perhaps do not need Lewis to confirm it.

Lewis’s second insight is that God, in divine empathy for humanity, is also a sufferer. Christ on the cross comprises the visions that Julian of Norwich sees as she approaches her own death, though she miraculously recovers. She wonders about the problem of suffering but offers no solution other than the fact that God suffers along with us. Lewis refers to her near the end of *The Great Divorce*. George MacDonald says this to Lewis’s persona: “It may be, as the Lord said to the Lady Julian, that all will be well, and all will be well, and all manner of things will be well.”<sup>26</sup> We can even wonder about God the Father’s grief over the sacrificial death of his Son, though this, of course, is not described in the Bible. Pastoral counseling that offers to the bereaved a simplistic reason for the grief is, I think, risky—even if the reason is true.

The third insight we can gain from Lewis is the most complicated and therefore potentially the most valuable. When Lewis describes grief, he depicts his bereaved characters as people simultaneously facing a moral choice—Digory and the apple he is tempted to give his mother against Aslan’s will, Pam who is offered the choice to love God first so she can resurrect her love for her dead son Michael. We have, I suspect, a tendency to consider bereaved people as victims of their grief—as passive sufferers and not active moral agents. The old word for suffering, after all, is “passion.” The word, of course, means something entirely different in modern culture, but the older meaning is still evident in the phrase “the passion of Christ.” The word is cognate with “patient”—both the quality one has when one endures and also the one who visits a physician. It is originally a passive word—and another cognate. But Lewis depicts his bereaved characters as people engaged in moral agency (a word cognate with “action”). They are in Lewis’s works engaged in the action of moral choice that may resolve for good, as in Digory’s case, or ill, as likely in Pam’s case. The pastor has an opportunity, in other words, to revise a misconception about the bereaved and respect the holiness of the moment of moral choice. This will perhaps help the pastor to avoid suggesting easy solutions to the very difficult problem of grief. But more important than this, the bereaved person according to Lewis is participating in a pattern of death and resurrection, learning to let go of a relationship so it may be born again. Digory learns to do this, while Pam does not. The pastor counseling a bereaved person is in effect a midwife—a facilitator who can help but cannot, of course, do everything. Pastoral care and counseling is, in other words, cooperative.

Many of us admire Lewis for his clear articulation of his Christian faith and his insistence, in the face of a mid-twentieth century theology that was willing to jettison the supernatural and the miraculous, that the God Christians worship is actively engaged in our lives. But Lewis’s insights are not only doctrinal, and he is concerned with more than right belief. As someone acquainted with grief and gifted with insights about it, he can allay George MacDonald’s fears that before he may speak to the bereaved mother Pam he must earn the right to do so. He already has.

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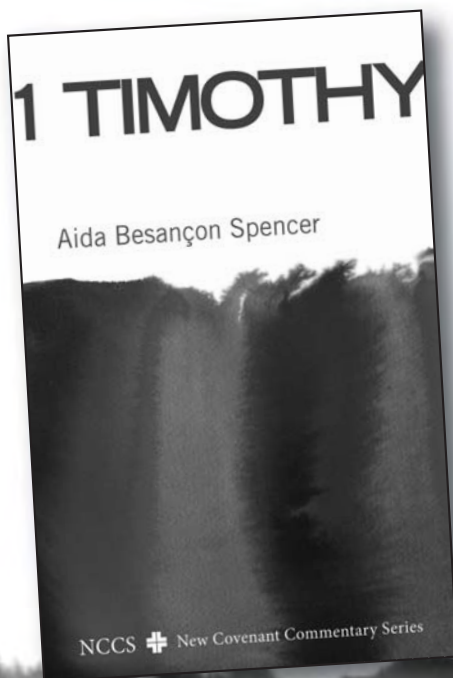
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<sup>25</sup> Lewis, *Collected Letters*, volume 2, p. 161.

<sup>26</sup> Lewis, *Great Divorce*, p. 124.

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# Paul's Parental Images in 1 Thessalonians 2:5-12 and 1 Corinthians 4:14-21 in Relationship to the Leadership Needs of China's House Churches

JET LI

## Introduction

Chinese house churches are growing rapidly in recent years. For example, ten years ago, the average size of house churches in Beijing was about 30-50. In recent years, the average size grew to about 100-200. Four big house churches have emerged in Beijing, each with about 1000 attenders.<sup>1</sup> In the three churches that I have served from 2003 to 2010, we have seen that, no matter how big the place we rent, within one to two years, people will fill up all the empty seats. According to a secret survey by the Religious Affairs Bureau of Beijing, an undercover agent disclosed that there are more than 15,000 house churches in Beijing in 2008. Rapid church growth is happening in other big cities such as Shanghai, Wuhan, Chengdu, Xiamen, and Guangzhou.<sup>2</sup>

As house churches grow, problems in leadership and discipleship emerge and become more and more prominent. My interview with twenty house church leaders reveals three critical and urgent leadership problems:

1. After years of leading, many house church leaders tend to be patriarchal (i.e., over-parenting or dictatorial).<sup>3</sup> Although such leadership has proved to be successful in the past, especially under high pressure and persecution, in recent years, it turns out to be a negative factor, which leads to church divisions, decrease of church growth, and the widening gap between senior leaders and the younger generation.
2. Rapid church growth leads to the institutionalization in house churches, which distances the relationship between pastors and their parish. Pastors become busier and more professional. Church members complain that their pastors care more about events, management, programs and ministries, rather than their church members. Consequently, discipleship becomes shallower, and pastoral care cannot meet the needs of the growing number of believers.<sup>4</sup> Christians lack spiritual parenting (under-parenting).
3. The rapid-growth strategy of para-churches (especially campus ministry) also reveals under-parenting of new believers. Such strategy is well known for its efficiency to win numerous "decisions" (to make a prayer to become a Christian) rapidly. These para-churches have well-developed programs to train new believers to get more "decisions," but neglect deeper disciple-making and church-commitment. Thus, some churches are in conflict with para-churches.

## Thesis

In this paper, the study of Paul's parental images in 1 Thessalonians 2:5-12 and 1 Corinthians 4:14-21 reveals Paul's leadership model as a spiritual parent, a humble servant, and a teamwork

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1 It took Beijing Shouwang Church about twenty years to grow to about 1,000. Beijing Zion Church grew from 20 in 2007 to 1,000 in 2012.

2 Liang Ren Church in Guangzhou has experienced frequent invasions from the local government. It has been forced to move out of its worshipping place more than forty times. Despite high pressure and threats, it grew from 20 to 200 in six years, see Jie Yu, *Abundant Grace into My Life* (Taipei, Taiwan: Christian Arts, 2011), 46.

3 Pastor Dao Wang says, "Senior leaders in Chinese house churches adopt patriarchal leadership, . . . I hope that every church has a team in ministry, rather than just one leader or one family, or else dictatorship may happen," Jie Yu, *Abundant Grace into My Life*, 44.

4 "I'm worrying about the hidden trouble of rapid growth of mega-churches. . . They may produce hierarchical structure. Pastors become CEOs, neglecting the spiritual needs of the congregation," Jie Yu, *Abundant Grace into My Life* (Taipei, Taiwan: Christian Arts, 2011), 118.



leader to the Thessalonians and the Corinthians. Paul's model will help to resolve the above mentioned leadership problems in Chinese house churches and para-churches.

Scholars disagree on the purpose of 1 Thessalonians 2:1-12, suggesting three major conclusions for Paul's purpose: exhortation, apology, and relationship. Abraham Malherbe draws from a parallel study between Dio Chrysostom's comments on Cynicism and 1 Thessalonians 2. He concludes that "we cannot determine . . . that he (Paul) is making a personal apology."<sup>5</sup> Gary Steven Shogren claims that Paul's major goal is exhortation (cf. 1 Sam 8:11-18; Acts 20:17-35).<sup>6</sup> Jan Lambrecht points out that Paul's frequent appeal to "veracity" and "the highly sensitive tone" in 2:1-12 present an "apology as true to life, to personal attacks."<sup>7</sup> Jeffrey Weima, cited by Karl Donfried, strongly asserts that Paul's primary purpose is apologetic.<sup>8</sup> Gordon Fee also argues for apology.<sup>9</sup> In contrast, Donfried argues for *Exodium* (Introduction), which is mainly to restate Paul's established friendship with the Thessalonians and to set Paul as a model.<sup>10</sup> Similarly, Johannes Schon-Janßen concludes that 1 Thessalonians is "essentially a letter of friendship."<sup>11</sup>

As for 1 Corinthians 4, most scholars agree that Paul's intention is apologetic. Such agreement may be because Paul defends his apostleship explicitly (1 Cor 4:9-13; 9:1-3; cf. 2 Cor 10:7-12). Eva Maria Lassen studies the hierarchical and predominant role of father in the Roman culture and concludes that Paul invokes "an authoritative relationship over the congregation as its founding father."<sup>12</sup> Based on the study of Jewish literature and Greco-Roman rhetoric, Mary Katherine Birge argues for Paul's apology of his parental authority<sup>13</sup> and intimate relationship.<sup>14</sup> Charles Wanamaker adopts a socio-rhetorical analysis and concludes that Paul uses paternal rhetoric to legitimate his authority because of "his position as the founder-progenitor of the community."<sup>15</sup> Fee points out that "the inherent authority of the father/child relationship allows him (Paul) alternately to 'admonish' (v.14), to 'urge' behavioral change (vv.16-17), and, if all else fails, to threaten discipline (vv. 18-21)."<sup>16</sup>

In this article, we will discover Paul's organic approach in 1 Thessalonians 2:5-12 and 1 Corinthians 4:14-21: (1) to begin, he makes an apology for his authority as a spiritual parent; (2) then, he tries to restore intimate relationship with his spiritual children; and (3), based on the restored parental authority and relationship, he continues his exhortation.

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5 Abraham J. Malherbe, "Gentle as a Nurse: The Cynic Background to 1 Thess 2," *NovT* 12, no. 2 (1970): 217.

6 Gary Steven Shogren, *1 and 2 Thessalonians* (Zondervan Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament; Grand Rapids, Mich.: Zondervan, 2012), 83.

7 Jan Lambrecht, "Thanksgivings in 1 Thessalonians 1-3," in *The Thessalonians Debate: Methodological Discord or Methodological Synthesis?* (eds. Karl P. Donfried and Johannes Beutler; Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eerdmans, 2000), 155, 160.

8 Karl P. Donfried, "The Epistolary and Rhetorical Context of 1 Thessalonians 2:1-12," in *The Thessalonians Debate*, 116, 130.

9 Gordon D. Fee, *The First and Second Letters to the Thessalonians* (NICNT; Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eerdmans, 2009), 55, 73, 81.

10 Donfried, "The Epistolary and Rhetorical Context of 1 Thessalonians 2:1-12," 60.

11 Johannes Schon-Janßen, "On the Use of Elements of Ancient Epistolography in 1 Thessalonians," in *The Thessalonians Debate*, 193.

12 Eva Maria Lassen, "The Use of the Father Image in Imperial Propaganda and 1 Corinthians 4:14-21," *TynBul* 42, no. 1 (1991): 127, 136.

13 Mary Katherine Birge, *The Language of Belonging: A Rhetorical Analysis of Kinship Language in First Corinthians* (Leuven; Dudley, Mass.: Peeters, 2002), 182.

14 Ibid., 34.

15 Charles A. Wanamaker, "The Power of the Absent Father: A Socio-Rhetorical Analysis of 1 Corinthians 4:14-5:13," in *The New Testament Interpreted: Essays in Honour of Bernard C. Latagan, NovTSup.* (eds. Cilliers Breitenbach, Johan Carl Thom, and Jeremy Punt; Leiden ; Boston: Brill, 2006), 339-62.

16 Gordon D. Fee, *The First Epistle to the Corinthians* (ed. F. F. Bruce; NICNT; Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eerdmans, 1987), 183.

## Historical Background

### *Historical Background of 1 Thessalonians*

Thessalonica was a free city since 42 B.C., governed by “politarchs.”<sup>17</sup> It was founded in the fourth century B.C.E. and at the time of Paul was the capital of the province of Macedonia.<sup>18</sup> Unlike most Roman cities, women in this city “held honor and authority.”<sup>19</sup> The city was a mixture of peoples (including Diaspora Jews) and various religions.<sup>20</sup>

Paul, Silvanus, and Timothy wrote 1 Thessalonians as a ministry team. They had preached the gospel to the recipients and planted the church in Thessalonica. Because they were forced to leave Thessalonica soon after their short evangelism, some people began questioning their motives (1 Thess 2:3-6). Moreover, the writers were genuinely concerned about their disciples (most being Gentiles, with some Jews).<sup>21</sup> These were under affliction and sufferings from their own countrymen, being killed, driven out, and hindered from preaching the gospel (1 Thess 1:6; 2:14, 15; 3:3-4; cf. 2 Thess 1:4-6).

Upon hearing good news about the recipients from Timothy, the authors wrote this affectionate letter as spiritual parents, to encourage the disciples to continue imitating their examples in sufferings and temptations, and to reveal their plan to encourage them face to face. They wrote the letter from Corinth between July A.D. 50 and July A.D. 51.

### *Historical Background of 1 Corinthians*

Corinth, also a colony of the Roman Empire, was renowned for its wealth, diverse religions, and horrible sins.<sup>22</sup> It was notorious for sexual vice.<sup>23</sup> The apostle Paul, who planted the Corinthian church, upon receiving the reports and letter about the divisions and disorders in the church, wrote 1 Corinthians from Ephesus to the recipients (most again, Gentiles, with some Jews)<sup>24</sup> between fall A.D. 52 and spring A.D. 55. Paul resorts to his own example as a humble servant and an affectionate spiritual parent. He exhorts his disciples to correct divisions and disorders and to use various gifts properly and humbly in love in the body of Christ.

### *Similarities between the Two Churches*

The Thessalonian church and Corinthian church were composed mainly of Gentiles, mixed with some Jews. Both were planted by Paul (and his coworkers). Both were located in cities where pagan religions were influential in daily life tainting food and encouraging sexual immorality. Thus, disciples in both churches needed exhortation against immoral practices.

### *Differences between the Two Churches*

The two churches differed in spiritual maturity and external context:

1. The churches differed in spiritual maturity: at the writing of each letter, the spiritual age of the Thessalonians was relatively young (1 to 2 years old), but spiritually they were more mature because they had already been imitators of their spiritual parents (1 Thess 1:3-10); whereas the spiritual age of the Corinthians was relatively old (3 to 6 years old), but as regard to spiritual maturity, they were infants (1 Cor 3:1).

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17 F. F. Bruce, *1 & 2 Thessalonians* (WBC 45; Waco, Tex.: Word Books, 1982), xxii.

18 Fee, *The First and Second Letters to the Thessalonians*, 5.

19 Ibid., 6.

20 Karl P. Donfried, “The Cults of Thessalonica and the Thessalonian Correspondence,” *NTS* 31, no. 3 (1985): 337–38; Fee, *The First and Second Letters to the Thessalonians*, 6.

21 Bruce, *1 & 2 Thessalonians*, xxiii.

22 J. Paul Sampley, *The New Interpreter’s Bible: General Articles & Introduction, Commentary, & Reflections for Each Book of the Bible, Including the Apocryphal/Deuterocanonical Books in Twelve Volumes* (ed. L.E. Keck; vol. 10, 12 vols.; Nashville: Abingdon, 1994), 773–75.

23 Fee, *The First Epistle to the Corinthians*, 2.

24 Ibid., 4.

2. The external contexts differed: The Thessalonians were facing persecution and pressure from their own countrymen (1 Thess 2:14). In contrast, there was no explicit mentioning of persecution or suffering in the Corinthian church, although Paul mentioned his own suffering experience (1 Cor 4:9-13) and persecution and adversaries in Ephesus (1 Cor 15:32; 16:9). The exhortations to “be steadfast” and “stand firm” (1 Cor 15:58; 16:13) may indicate external persecution, but the major danger of the church was internal divisions and immoral practices.

In his two letters, Paul’s attitude and relationship to these two churches are different. His attitude to the Thessalonians is mild and gentle, but his attitude to the Corinthians is strong. Paul has spent just about a month in Thessalonica (Acts 17:2, 10), but he has spent more than one and half years in Corinth (Acts 18:11, 18). We may expect that he may have a closer relationship with the Corinthians than with the Thessalonians. On the contrary, Paul’s relationship with the Thessalonians is more intimate. Paul is thankful to God because of the Thessalonian disciples’ faith, love and hope (1 Thess 1:2, 3), and being imitators of the apostles (1 Thess 2:13, 14). He gently and affectionately defends the pure motive of the ministry team to the Thessalonians (1 Thess 2). He also repeatedly emphasizes the team’s eagerness and love to meet with their spiritual children (1 Thess 2:8, 17-19; 3:10). In contrast, although he is thankful for the gifts of the Corinthians (1 Cor 1:4, 5), he is anxious about their divisions and other problems (1 Cor 1:10, 11; 5:1; 6:1, etc.). Sometimes his voice sounds harsh, sarcastic, and serious (1 Cor 3:3; 4:8; 5:2; 6:5-8). Because some people are questioning his apostleship, which results in divisions, he defends his apostleship (1 Cor ch. 9). In general, his relationship with the Corinthians has been undermined and is detached. Nevertheless, he tries to restore his relationship with them in parental love (1 Cor 4:14-21) and longs to meet with them (1 Cor 16:7).

**Table 1. Historical Context Comparison of 1 Thessalonians and 1 Corinthians**

	1 Thessalonians	1 Corinthians
Author(s)	Paul is the leading author on behalf of the ministry team (Paul, Silvanus, and Timothy).	Paul is the dominant author (Sosthenes is mentioned too, but may just be a secretary or a coworker).
Date of Writing	July A.D. 50 to July A.D. 51	fall A.D. 52 to spring A.D. 55
Place of Writing	Corinth	Ephesus
Age of Church	1 to 2 years	3 to 6 years
Relationship with the Authors	Paul and Silas first preached the gospel to the recipients. Later Timothy went to encourage them.	Paul, Priscilla, and Aquila planted the church. Later Silvanus (Silas) and Timothy joined them. Then Apollos equipped them.
Composition of the Recipients	Mainly Gentiles (some had converted to Judaism, some are important women), some Jews	Jews and Gentiles (Mainly Gentiles)
Positive Factors of the Church	The recipients became imitators in faith, love, and hope throughout Macedonian and Achaia.	The recipients are rich in gifts. The testimony about Christ is confirmed.

Main Issues of the Church	Sufferings Suspicion about the authors' motives Idle people Worry about resurrection	Divisions, boasting in gifts Questioning Paul's apostleship Sexual immorality Disorders in worship and food Doubt about resurrection
Purpose	The ministry team justifies their pure motives: to restore the relationship as spiritual parents, and to comfort and encourage their disciples to continue imitating them under afflictions and sufferings.	The apostle Paul exemplifies himself as a humble servant of Christ to resolve the divisions and other disorders in the church in love.
Author's Overall Attitude	Affectionate, gentle, mild in defending, caring about the recipients under sufferings, eager to meet face to face	Direct, personal, strong in asserting/defending, strong but still affectionate

### Translation

#### 1 Thessalonians 2:5-12

5) For we never came with a word of flattery, as you know, nor in pretext of covetousness, (God is our witness), 6) nor seeking glory from human beings, either from you or from others; 7a) being able to be burdensome as apostles of Christ, 7b) but we came as infants<sup>25</sup> among you.<sup>26</sup> 7c) As if a nursing-mother taking care of her very own children, 8) in this manner, strongly longing for you, we are delighted<sup>27</sup> to share with you not only the gospel of God, but also our own lives, because you became beloved to us. 9) For you remember, brothers and sisters, our labor and toil: working night and day, so not to be a burden upon anyone of you, we preached the gospel of God among you. 10a) You are witnesses, God also, 10b) how we became pious and righteous and blameless to you, who are believers (lit. the ones believing), 11-12) just as you know, as each one of you, as a father (treats)<sup>28</sup> his own children, exhorting and comforting and imploring you, that you shall live in a way worthy of God, who calls you into his own kingdom and glory.

#### 1 Corinthians 4:14-21

25 Most Chinese Bibles translate “gentle.” Only the Chinese Standard Version footnotes “infants.” The Chinese Contemporary Bible translates, “we treat you as a mother nurtures an infant.” *Ēpioi* (“gentle”) has the early support of the Syriac, Coptic Sahidic and Clement of Alexandria (3 cent.), good quality witnesses (א<sup>2</sup>, A, 33, 1739, 1881) and a variety of text types: Alexandrian (Sahidic, A, א<sup>2</sup>, Ψ<sup>c</sup>, 33, 1739, 1881, Cl), Western (D<sup>2</sup>, vg<sup>cl</sup>), and Byzantine (C<sup>2</sup>, ℳ). However, *nēpioi* (“infants”) has the early support of the Coptic Sahidic and p<sup>65</sup> (3 cent.), and better quality witnesses (א<sup>\*</sup>, B) and a variety of text types: Alexandrian (p<sup>65</sup>, א<sup>\*</sup>, B, I, Ψ<sup>\*</sup>, 104\*, 326\*, bo), Western (vg<sup>cl</sup>, D\*, F, G), and Byzantine (C\*). א<sup>\*</sup>, C\* and D\* are earlier than א<sup>2</sup>, C<sup>2</sup> and D<sup>2</sup> respectively. *Ēpioi* (“gentle”) fits the immediate context much easier than does *nēpioi* (“infants”). Thus, to ease the difficulty, scribes may have revised intentionally from *nēpioi* to *ēpioi*. However, it is very likely that the metaphor of *nēpioi* emphasizes the authors’ humbleness. This is more vivid than the abstract concept of *ēpioi*. In addition, the image of an innocent and powerless *nēpioi* contrasts sharply with the authors’ authority as apostles. Therefore, *nēpioi* is more preferable than *ēpioi*, as in NA28.

26 *Nēpioi* (“infants”) is in contrast to apostles, whereas “nursing-mother” is related to *tekna* (“children”), not to *nēpioi*. Thus, I adopt the punctuation as in NET, splitting v. 7b from v. 7c into two separate sentences. Sailors argues for the same punctuation because two different terms for “child” (*vēpioi* and *tekna*) are used separately, see Timothy B. Sailors, “Wedding Textual and Rhetorical Criticism to Understand the Text of 1 Thessalonians 2.7,” *JSNT*, no. 80 (2000): 81–98; Fee’s sentence structure clearly supports our punctuation, see Fee, *The First and Second Letters to the Thessalonians*, 66.

27 “With infinitive ‘be determined to,’” Max Zerwick, *A Grammatical Analysis of the Greek New Testament* (Unabridged, 5th, rev. ed.; Roma: Gregorian & Biblical, 2010), 615.

28 We use “treats” (as in NET) to summarize the three participles (exhorting and comforting and imploring).



14) Not making you ashamed, I write these things, but as my beloved children, admonishing<sup>29</sup> (you). 15) For even if you may have ten thousand guardians in Christ, on the contrary, you (do) not (have) many fathers, for, in Christ Jesus through the gospel, I did beget you.<sup>30</sup> 16) Therefore, I am exhorting you, become my imitators! 17) Because of this, I sent Timothy to you, who is my beloved and faithful child in the Lord, who will remind you of my ways in Christ [Jesus], just as (what) I am teaching everywhere in every church. 18) But, as if I were not coming to you, some people were arrogant, 19) but I will come quickly to you, if the Lord might will, then, I will find out not the word of the arrogant ones, but (their) power, 20) because the kingdom of God (is) not in word, but in power. 21) What do you want? Shall I come to you with a rod of discipline,<sup>31</sup> or with love and a gentle spirit?

## Literary Context

### *Literary Context of 1 Thessalonians 2:5-12*

The apostle Paul writes this letter to the disciples in the Thessalonian church on behalf of the ministry team (Paul, Silvanus, and Timothy). He presents their affectionate examples as spiritual parents for their spiritual children to continue imitating them under afflictions.

The team first gives thanks to God because the recipients became their imitators in faith, love and hope (1 Thess 1:1-10). Then, they mildly justify their pure motive by their examples as spiritual parents (2:1-12). The passage 2:5-12 ensures the recipients about the authors' pure motives and genuine love. This passage plays a major role in this letter: it explains why the recipients could live out such a widespread example (1:2-10; 2:13-14); it exudes the authors' genuine affection to their disciples that they want to meet them eagerly (2:17-3:5); it paves the way to exhort the recipients to continue imitating them in love and holiness (3:6-4:12), to hope in Christ's returning (4:13-5:11), and to obey other admonishments (5:12-27).

1 Thessalonians 2:5-12 addresses the major problem that some people in the Thessalonian church are questioning the motive of the ministry team (2:3, 5).

### *Literary Context of 1 Corinthians 4:14-21*

To correct the divisions and disorders in the Corinthian church, Paul wrote this first letter to appeal to the saints to be united in Christ (1 Cor 1:10-17). He exemplifies himself as a humble servant of Christ to resolve the disorders in the church in love.

After greeting (1:1-3) and thanksgiving (1:4-8), Paul addresses the divisions in the Corinthian church (1:9-4:21). Paul first appeals to the Corinthians to be united (1:9-17). Then he forsakes secular wisdom, which is the root of the divisions, and resorts to Christ, the wisdom and power of God (1:18-2:16). Then he corrects the perspective of Christian leaders as servants (3:1-4:5). Paul applies servanthood to himself as a model of a spiritual parent (4:6-21). The passage 4:14-21 contains Paul's core principle of leadership, which summaries 1:9-4:21. In the rest of the letter, he continues exhorting the Corinthians to live in holiness in the areas of food and marriage, using their gifts in love and living in the hope of resurrection.

29 Textual variants are *nouthetōn*, *nouthetō*, and *nouthetē*. *Nouthetē* could hardly be the original text because it has only one support  $\text{p}^{46\text{c}}$ . *Nouthetōn* has the early support ( $\aleph$ , A, C), good quality witnesses ( $\aleph$ , A, C, 33, 1739) and two text types: Alexandrian ( $\aleph$ , A, C, 33, 945, 1175, 1739) and Byzantine (*I* 249, 6, 104, 365, 630,). In contrast, *nouthetō* has the earlier support of  $\text{p}^{46\text{c}}$  (ca. 200), B and latt (4 c.), good quality witnesses ( $\text{p}^{46\text{c}}$ , B, D, F, G, 1881), and a variety of text types – Alexandrian ( $\text{p}^{46\text{c}}$ , B,  $\Psi$ , 81, 1881), Western (latt, D, F, G), and Byzantine ( $\aleph$ , L, *I* 846, 1241, 1505, 1506, 2464). *Nouthetō* has the earlier witnesses and a variety of witnesses. And it is more difficult in v.14 than the participle *nouthetōn*. However, the *ouk . . . alla* structure in v.14 supports the participle because it parallels *entrepōn*. It is likely that scribes omitted the final letter v accidentally. Thus, I agree with Gordon Fee that the participle *nouthetōn* corresponds to Paul's style, see Fee, *The First Epistle to the Corinthians*, 182.

30 "I did beget you" (YLT).

31 NIV 1984 translates "whip," but NIV 2011 changes to "rod of discipline." "Rod" is a metaphor for discipline or punishment. See word study on *rhabdos*.

1 Corinthians 4:14-21 addresses the major problem of divisions aroused by those who were arrogant, boasting in their gifts in the Corinthian church (4:6, 7, 18).

## Grammatical, Syntactic and Stylistic Analysis

### 1 Thessalonians 2:5-12

#### Structural/Syntactic Analysis

Verses 5-7b form a long compound sentence with two main clauses: “for we never came (*egenēthēmen*) with a word of flattery . . .” and “we came (*egenēthēmen*) as infants among you.” The conjunction “but” forms a strong contrast between the two clauses, emphasizing the latter clause. The first main clause has two subordinate clauses (parenthetical): *kathōs oidate* (“as you know”) and “God (is) our witness.” Verse 6 omits the verb *egenēthēmen*. Two parallel participles *zētountes* (“seeking”) and *dynamenoi* (“being able to”) depict in detail how the authors “came.”

Verses 7c-8 form a main clause “in this manner, we are delighted to share with you.”<sup>32</sup> It has two subordinate clauses: (1) a preceding subordinate clause—“as if a nursing-mother taking care of her own children,” emphasizing the nature of the authors’ sharing; (2) a subordinate causal clause in the end—“because you became (*egenēthēte*) beloved to us,”<sup>33</sup> explaining why the authors are eager to share the gospel, even share their own lives.

Verse 9 has two independent main clauses: “you remember . . .” and “we preached the gospel . . .” Verse 10a has two main clauses (the predicate *este* is omitted)—“you are witnesses, God also.” These two main clauses share three adverbial clauses in vv. 10b-12. Verse 10b “how we became (*egenēthēmen*) pious and righteous and blameless,” depicts in detail the manner of the witness. In v.11, “just as you know,” is a parenthetical clause. It has the same effect as “you are witnesses” in v.10a, stressing the undeniable testimony by the recipients. In v.11, *hōs* introduces a noun clause, depicting the content of what “you know.” In v.12, the third subordinate clause omits the verb *egenēthēmen*, which has three participles—“exhorting and comforting and imploring you . . .” This subordinate clause has a comparative adverbial clause—“as a father (treats) his own children.” It also has an adverbial clause, stating the purpose: “you shall live in a way worthy of God . . .”

There are three sections in this passage: (1) the ministry team is humble and pure in motivation (vv.5-7b); (2) the team serves as a spiritual mother (vv.7c-8); (3) the team serves as a spiritual father (vv.9-12).

#### Infant Image in 1 Thessalonians 2:5-7b

Paul mentions “flattery” and “covetousness” together because “flattery was commonly viewed as a way to get money out of others.”<sup>34</sup> As apostles, they have the right to “be burdensome,” which “refers to the weight of authority that might manifest itself either as a demand for financial support or as a demand for respect.”<sup>35</sup>

In vv. 5-7b, the pleonasm of *oute . . . oute . . . oute . . . oute . . . oute . . .* presents a series of lists, dealing with the suspicion about the authors’ motive in the Thessalonian church, *alla* (v.7) introduces a brief but strong conclusion about what the authors have been—“we became infants among you.” Two verbs (*egenēthēmen*) are omitted to keep the list going, stressing that the suspicion is not a small thing. *Oute* together with *pote* means “never.”<sup>36</sup> *Pote* and the prepositional phrase *en*

32 In NA27 and NA28, there is a comma before *hōs* in v. 7, regarding the *hōs* clause as a subordinate clause to the main clause with the verb *egenēthēmen*, but the *hōs* clause serves better to modify the following main clause in v. 8. Paul uses a similar structure in Ephesians 5:24.

33 Fee, *The First and Second Letters to the Thessalonians*, 66–67.

34 Gene L. Green, *The Letters to the Thessalonians* (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eerdmans, 2002), 108.

35 “Material support in return for spiritual or philosophical instruction was common both in the church and in the Hellenistic world in general. It was not considered improper. In this context the term indicates more than simple financial support,” D. Michael Martin, *1, 2 Thessalonians* (Nashville, Tenn.: Broadman & Holman, 1995), 76.

36 “ποτέ,” BDAG, BibleWorks v.9.

*logō kolakeias* precede the verb *egenēthēmen*, impressing the recipients that the authors are raising their voice against false questioning.

In this passage, the verb *ginomai* has four occurrences and three omissions. This pleonasm shows how intensely the authors focus on proving what they have been and done to the recipients, to which both God and the recipients are their witnesses.

In v.7, the metaphor *nēpioi* (“infants”) stresses two aspects: (1) the authors are as pure as infants (in contrast to “impurity or deception” in 2:3);<sup>37</sup> (2) the authors are as humble as infants, in contrast to their authority as apostles to be a burden (*barei*). In 2 Corinthians, Paul says he will not be a burden (*katanarkaō*) (2 Cor 12:14). In Roman society, a child had an automatic right of inheritance from his father.<sup>38</sup> In contrast to the apostolic burden, Paul also uses maternal and paternal images.

### Maternal Image in 1 Thessalonians 2:7c-8

In v.7, another metaphor shifts the focus to the authors’ intimate relationship with the recipients as *trophos* (“nursing mothers”). This metaphor is further developed in vv.7c-8. *Heautēs* precedes *tekna*, emphasizing that these children are not of other people, but of the wet-nursing mother herself. This emphasis excludes the general meaning of *trophos* as a “nurse.”

*Trophos* occurs once in the New Testament. In other literature, it has three groups of meaning: (1) “a wet-nurse (not a mother)”: Rebecca’s nurse Deborra (Gen 35:8 LXX); Mephibosheth’s nurse (Josephus, *Ant.* 7.113); (2) “a mother (general term)”: “father and mother (*trophon*) of the priests” (Josephus, *Ant.* 6.262); (3) “a nursing mother”: e.g., Moses’ mother (Philo, *Mos.* 1:18). It means “a nursing-mother” in 1 Thessalonians 2:7 because the “children” are “her very own.” Weima also argues for this meaning because of the reflexive pronoun, classical justification, and the surrounding family metaphors of infants (1 Thess 2:7b) and father (1 Thess 2:11).<sup>39</sup> Paul also writes to the Galatians with a maternal image: “My children—I am again undergoing birth pains (*ōdinō*) until Christ is formed in you!” (Gal 4:19) Paul longs for the regeneration and maturity of his spiritual children.

*Thalpō* has the following meanings: (1) “to cherish”: a husband is to love his wife as *ektrephei kai thalpei* (“to nourish and cherish”) his own body (Eph 5:29); (2) “to brood, hatch”: a mother bird is “brooding on the young or the eggs” (Deut 22:6; cf. Job 39:14 LXX); (3) “to serve as a nurse”: when David was old, a virgin served him as a nurse (1 King 1:2, 4 LXX); (4) “to comfort/afford hope”: *tas elpidas autōn ethalpe tēs sōtērias* (“to afford hope of salvation”) (Josephus, *J. W.* 4.432). In 1 Thessalonians 2:7, the authors are said to be as nursing mothers, thus, *thalpō* combines #2 and #3, “to serve as if they were nursing-mothers,” i.e., “to take care of, as a nursing-mother.” These spiritual mothers feed the recipients as they would their own children, e.g., Paul decides to feed the Corinthians (who are infants in Christ) with “pure milk” (1 Cor 3:2a).

In v.8, the participle phrase *homeiromenoi hymōn* (“longing for you”) precedes the verb *eudokoumen* (“we are delighted to”). This transposition emphasizes that the authors care for the recipients so deeply that they long for meeting them and comforting them.

*Metadidōmi* means: (1) “to share physical things” (Luke 3:11; Rom 12:8; Eph 4:28; Prov 11:26; Job 31:17; 2 Macc 1:35); (2) “to share a spiritual gift” (Rom 1:11); (3) “to communicate a message or wisdom,” e.g., *metedōken ton logon* (Tob 7:10; cf. 2 Macc 8:12; Wis 7:13). In 1 Thessalonians 2:8, when *metadidōmi* relates to the gospel, it means “to communicate message;” when it relates to the authors’ lives, it means “to share physical things,” i.e., to share their own lives (v.8).

<sup>37</sup> See Fee, *The First and Second Letters to the Thessalonians*, 71.

<sup>38</sup> Beryl Rawson, “Adult-Child Relationships in Roman Society,” in *Marriage, Divorce, and Children in Ancient Rome* (ed. Beryl Rawson; Canberra: Oxford: Humanities Research Centre ; Clarendon, 1996), 26.

<sup>39</sup> Jeffrey A. D. Weima, “Infants, Nursing Mother, and Father: Paul’s Portrayal of a Pastor,” *Calvin Theological Journal* 37, no. 2 (2002): 221.

In v.8, *agapētoi hēmin* precedes the verb *egenēthēte*, emphasizing the recipients, rather than the authors. This transposition emphasizes what the recipients became: beloved.

The similarities between the authors and a nursing-mother are: (1) to feed the infants with proper food; (2) to bond with the children with genuine love. The authors are different from a physical nursing-mother: (1) the authors are not necessarily women; (2) the food is the gospel, not breast milk; (3) the bond of love is not of blood, but in Christ; (4) the love may be deeper—to share even their lives for the children. The image of a nursing-mother in vv.7c-8 further justifies the authors' pure motivation. The genuine maternal love gently appeals to the disciples to restore their intimate relationship with the authors.

### Paternal Image in 1 Thessalonians 2:9-12

Following the maternal image, the authors continue justifying their pure motive with a paternal image in vv.9-12. In v.9, *kopon* ("labor") is a pleonasm of *mochthon* ("toil"), emphasizing how hard the authors have labored. *Nyktos kai hēmeras* ("a night and a day") is a synecdoche, indicating "always." This phrase emphasizes how hard the authors have labored for their own supplies,<sup>40</sup> so as not to be a financial burden to the recipients. This is a solid proof that the ministry team came without flattery or covetousness (v.5). The verb *epibarēsai* ("to burden") references the noun *bareī* ("a burden") in v.7, embodying the authors' abstaining from exerting their apostolic authority.

Verse 10a is a pleonasm of v.5 "God (is) our witness." The "witness" is a language of judgment, emphasizing the genuineness of the testimony.<sup>41</sup> In v.10, *hymeis* ("you") is added to emphasize the validity of this very witness by the recipients. In v.10, the ellipsis of *este* ("are") between *hymeis* ("you") and *martyres* ("witnesses"), and the ellipsis of *este* and *martyres* after *theos* ("God") keeps the argument terse and powerful. "God also (is witness)" echoes v.5, appealing strongly to the recipients own memory of the authors' previous behaviors. The parallelism (also polysyndeton) of *hosiōs* ("pious") and *dikaiōs* ("righteous") and *amemptōs* ("blameless") echoes the parallelism (also pleonasm) of *ouk ek plānēs* ("not from error") and *oude ex akatharsias* ("or impurity") and *oude en dolō* ("or with deceit") in v.3. This parallelism conveys the authors' genuine concern about having their motivation questioned, which is undermining their relationship with the Thessalonians. The authors resort to what they have been and done among the recipients to justify their pure motivation and to restore their relationship. Verses 9-10 appeal to the recipients to recall the examples that the authors have set among them—they labored diligently for the gospel so as not to be a burden, and they lived piously and blamelessly among the believers.

In v.11, *kathaper oidate* ("just as you know") repeats *kathōs oidate* ("as you know") in v.5. This pleonasm is "deliberately employed"<sup>42</sup> to arouse again the recipients' own conscious testimony. It is also the authors' "habits of speech,"<sup>43</sup> as evidence in 1 Thessalonians (1:4, 5; 2:1, 2; 3:3, 4; 4:2; 5:2). In contrast, similar speech occurs frequently in 1 Corinthians (1 Cor 3:16; 5:6; 6:2, 3, 9, 15, 16, 19; 9:13, 24), but with *ouk* to form rhetorical questions, expressing Paul's stronger argument on what the Corinthians should have known. In 1 Thessalonians 2:11, *hōs patēr tekna heautou* ("as a father (treats) his children") parallels *hōs ean trophos thalpē ta heautēs tekna* ("as a nursing-mother taking care of her very own children") in v.7. Both passages have "children" and a reflexive word to emphasize the intimate relationship between parent and children. *Hena hekaston hymōn* ("each one of you") precedes the subject *patēr* ("father") (and, thus, precedes the omitted verb), focusing on each one of the recipients, rather than on the "father."

40 See also Fee, *The First and Second Letters to the Thessalonians*, 38.

41 Based on the study of the OT, Greco-Roman rhetoric, and Paul's own usage, Novenson concludes that "God is witness" means "God is testifying for Paul that Paul's character can be trusted," see Novenson, "God Is Witness," 356; Shogren, *1 and 2 Thessalonians*.

42 Aida Besançon Spencer, *Paul's Literary Style: A Stylistic and Historical Comparison of II Corinthians 11:16-12:13, Romans 8:9-39, and Philipians 3:2-4:13* (Lanham: University Press of America, 1998), 203.

43 Ibid.



The metaphors of *patēr* and *tekna* are similar to the metaphors of “nursing-mother” and “her own children.” The difference is that v.12 depicts in detail the relationship between the “father” and “his own children.” In v.12 *parakalountes kai paramythoumenoi kai martyromenoi* (“exhorting and comforting and imploring”) is polysyndeton. The omission of *hymas* after the second and third participles keeps the polysyndeton terse.

*Parakaleō* occurs 109 times in the NT, and 140 times in the LXX. The noun *paraklēsis* occurs 29 times in the NT, and 16 times in the LXX. *Parakaleō* has the following meanings: (1) “to call/summon;” (2) “to beseech;” (3) “to exhort;” (4) “to comfort;” (5) to be friendly.”<sup>44</sup> (1) “to call/summon”: “I called (*parekalesa*) to see and to speak with you” (Acts 28:20; cf. Acts 8:31); (2) “to beseech/implore”: Paul urged (*parakalō*) the Corinthians to reaffirm their love (2 Cor 2:8); Paul pleaded (*parekalesa*) to the Lord three times (2 Cor 12:8); (3) “to comfort/encourage people in a difficult situation”: Rachel would refuse “to be comforted” (Matt 2:18); to comfort those in sufferings (2 Cor 1: 4, 6; 2:7); Timothy was sent “to encourage” the Thessalonians (1 Thess 3:2). The noun *paraklēsis* means “encouragement” (Rom 15:4; 1 Cor 14:3); (4) “to exhort/urge to do something”: “I urge (*parakalō*) you, then, be imitators of me” (1 Cor 4:16; cf. 2 Cor 5:20; 1 Thess 5:14); (5) “to treat friendly”: “when people lie about us, we answer in a friendly manner (*dysphēmoumenoi parakaloumen*)” (1 Cor 4:13 NET).<sup>45</sup> The authors’ purpose is that the recipients “shall live in a way worthy of God,” therefore, the major meaning here is “to exhort” (1 Thess 2:12). Since suffering is one major concern in the letter, *parakaleō* could also mean “to comfort.”

Paul used *paramytheomai* twice (1 Thess 2:12; 5:14). *Paramytheomai* occurs twice in the Gospel of John (John 11:19, 31). The nouns *paramythion* and *paramythia* occur four times in the LXX. *Paramytheomai* has two basic meanings: (1) “to console/comfort (people in grief/complaint)”: “Jews had come to Martha and Mary to console them concerning their brother” (John 11:19); the Levite from Gibeah attempted to “comfort” his wife who was raped (Josephus, *Ant.* 5.148); “who comforted (*paramythoumenos*) me under the trouble I was in upon the slaughter” (Josephus, *J. W.* 1.627). The noun *paramythion/paramythia* relates to death or grief: “or, if they die quickly, they have no hope, neither comfort (*paramythion*) in the day of trial” (Wis 3:18); “no small comfort (*paramythia*) and alleviation (*meiligmata*) of the grief felt for the one who is sacrificed” (Philo, *Abr.* 1.196); (2) “to encourage frustrated people by presenting hope”: Maccabeus “encouraged (*parekalei*) his people not to fear the attack of the Gentiles, . . . and encouraging (*paramythoumenos*) them with words from the law and the prophets” (2 Macc 15:7-9); “I also invited Simon, and comforted (*paremythoumēn*) him concerning what had happened, and I promised that I would send him safe and secure to Jerusalem” (Josephus, *Life* 1.330). Paul used the word in the same way: *paramytheisthe tous oligopsychous* (“encourage the faint-hearted”) (1 Thess 5:14). Since the authors of 1 Thessalonians eagerly care about the recipients’ sufferings, and some believers are questioning the resurrection of those who died, the recipients may understand *paramytheomai* in both meanings—“to comfort” and “to encourage.”

*Martyromai* occurs five times in the NT, of which three occur in Paul’s letters. *Martyromai* means: (1) “to testify/declare”: Paul “testifies” (*martyromai*) his innocence of the responsibility for people’s blood (Acts 20:26; cf. Acts 26:22);<sup>46</sup> Paul “testifies” (*martyromai*) to the circumcised (Gal 5:3); (2) “to beseech/implore”: Paul “beseeches” (*martyromai*) the Ephesians in the Lord not to walk (live) in the immoral way that the Gentiles do (Eph 4:17). The noun *martyr* occurs 35 times in the NT. Generally, it means “witness,” i.e., a person who testifies.<sup>47</sup> In the immediate context of 1 Thessalonian 2:12, the authors do not testify or affirm something, but beseech the recipients “to

<sup>44</sup> See “παρακαλέω,” BDAG, BibleWorks v.9; Schmitz, “παρακαλέω, παράκλησις,” TDNT 5:774.

<sup>45</sup> BDAG classifies the meaning in 1 Thessalonians 2:12 under this group, but according to the immediate context, it is unlikely.

<sup>46</sup> Thayer puts the meaning in Acts 26:22 under “to beseech,” “μαρτύρομαι,” BibleWorks v.9; whereas BDAG puts it under the meaning group “to affirm,” BibleWorks v.9.

<sup>47</sup> For example, Paul declares, “God is my witness” (Rom 1:9; 2 Cor 1:23; 1 Thess 2:5, 10; Phil 1:8).

walk in the way worthy of God.” This is quite similar to Ephesians 4:17. Thus, the meaning is very likely “to beseech/implore.” However, in the whole letter of 1 Thessalonians, the meaning can also be “to testify/declare” because the authors are testifying about their pure motivation (1 Thess 2:3-5).

According to the grammatical parallelism in 1 Thessalonians 2:12, *parakaleō*, *paramytheomai* and *martyromai* function as synonyms.<sup>48</sup> The meanings of these words vary slightly: *parakaleō* focuses more on “exhorting,” *paramytheomai* on “comforting,” and *martyromai* on “imploing.”<sup>49</sup>

In v.12, the authors, as spiritual fathers to the recipients, do not seek their own interest, but the benefits of the recipients, i.e., in the right way—“you shall live in a way worthy of God,” and toward the right goal—“into his own kingdom and glory.” Shogren proposes the meaning “his glorious kingdom.”<sup>50</sup> Paul’s mentioning of both God’s kingdom and glory is purposeful. In the immediate context, Paul contrasts the glory of God to the “glory from human beings” (v.6). Moreover, he is preparing for his ongoing exhortation to the Thessalonians that they shall not be overwhelmed by the persecutions for the sake of their faith (2:14, 15), and not lose their hope of resurrection because some are dead (4:13, 16).<sup>51</sup> Thus, “glory” also contrasts with what the Thessalonians are experiencing now—shame, persecution, and affliction. “The kingdom of God” reminds them to have faith in God’s ultimate and complete reign in the future.<sup>52</sup>

The paternal image in vv.9-12 shows the similarities between a father and the authors: (1) to set a virtuous model for children; (2) to exhort, comfort and implore, with the goal to train up children to live in a right way. However, there are differences: (1) a virtuous father might not be completely pious and blameless; (2) the spiritual father-children relationship is based on the gospel of God not on nature (v.9); (3) the spiritual father’s goal of exhortation is not just a virtuous life, but to live a Christian way. The paternal image not only presents convincing proof of the authors’ pure motivation, but also refreshes the memory of the spiritual children about the authors’ being and doing among them.

### Conclusion of 1 Thessalonians 2:5-12

In 1 Thessalonians 2:5-12, Paul leads the ministry team in defending their pure motivation of ministry and expressing their genuine love toward their disciples through parental images: (1) the image of a nursing-mother to emphasize their genuine love and care toward their disciples; (2) the image of a virtuous father to emphasize their being and doing as examples to follow.

The Apostle Paul combines the two different ways of parental love as Church Father Ambrose mentioned—a mother’s tender affection and a father who judges for the honor of the child, “each way compensates the other’s shortcomings” (Ambrose, *De Iacob et uita beata* 2.2.7).<sup>53</sup>

### 1 Corinthians 4:14-21

#### Structural/Syntactic Analysis

Verse 14 is a main clause “I write these things . . .,” coordinating with two causal clauses in v. 15 by *gar*: “you (do) not (have) many fathers” and “I did beget you.”<sup>54</sup> These two causal clauses form a

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48 See also Carl Joachim Classen, *Rhetorical Criticism of the New Testament* (Boston, Mass.: Brill Academic, 2002), 36; Bruce, *1 & 2 Thessalonians*, 36.

49 “These three together summarize the exhortation, persuasion, and insistence with which the apostolic team delivered the moral instruction to *each one* of the members of this church,” Green, *The Letters to the Thessalonians*, 136.

50 Shogren sees the *kai* as hendiadys (the “co-ordination of two ideas, one of which is dependent on the other”), thus proposes the meaning “his glorious kingdom,” see Shogren, *1 and 2 Thessalonians*, 108.

51 See also Bruce, *1 & 2 Thessalonians*, 37.

52 “Kingdom of God” language, see Fee, *The First and Second Letters to the Thessalonians*, 83–84; Shogren, *1 and 2 Thessalonians*, 108–09.

53 Emiel Eyben, “Fathers and Sons,” in *Marriage, Divorce, and Children in Ancient Rome* (ed. Beryl Rawson; Canberra: Oxford: Humanities Research Centre; Clarendon, 1996), 117.

54 Wanamaker correctly points out that *gar* in 4:15 introduces “the rationale (which) supports Paul’s right to admonish the Corinthians,” Wanamaker, “The Power of the Absent Father,” 345.

parallel thought, asserting the same argument in different aspects,<sup>55</sup> explaining why Paul's purpose is not to make the recipients shameful, but to admonish them as a spiritual father who serves humbly (cf. 1 Cor 3:22-4:1). In contrast, later when Paul accuses the recipients of their suing brothers and sisters before non-Christian judges. He wants to make them feel ashamed (6:5). Thus, what makes the disciples shameful is not Paul's sufferings (4:9-13), but the shameful things they have done.

As a result (*oun*) of 4:14-15, in v.16 Paul exhorts the recipients with a noun clause—"Become my imitators!" This clause explains why Paul sent Timothy to remind them (v.17). Verse 17 is a main clause with two parallel adjectival *hos* clauses, modifying Timothy, "who is my beloved and faithful child in the Lord" and "who will remind you of my ways of living, the ones in Christ." The latter adjectival clause has an embedded adverbial clause, "just as I teach everywhere."

Verse 18 is a main clause, "some people were arrogant," with an adverbial clause (comparison), "as if I were not coming to you." *De* ("but") coordinates the main clause in v.18 with the two main clauses in v.19, focusing on the latter part. The first main clause in v.19 states Paul's plan to go to Corinth soon. This clause includes a conditional clause ("if the Lord wills"), stating that Paul will not go by his own will, but according to the Lord's will. In v.19, *kai* introduces the second main clause ("I will find out . . ."). Its subordinate clause (causal) follows in v.20, "because the kingdom of God (is) not in word, but in power." Verse 21 starts with a question, "What do you want?" Then Paul offers two options, "Shall I come with a rod of discipline, or with love and a gentle spirit?" It is a rhetorical question. Paul thinks that the Corinthians certainly would prefer the latter.

This passage has three sections: (1) Paul admonishes the Corinthians because he is a spiritual father in Christ; (2) Paul exhorts them to imitate his ways; (3) Paul warns the arrogant of his discipline if they do not correct their behavior toward God, one another, and himself.

### Semantic, Grammatical and Stylistic Analysis

In 1 Corinthians 4:14 the participle *entrepōn* ("making . . . ashamed") precedes *graphō* ("I write"), together with *ouk*, emphasizing the denial of the false impression of Paul's intention—"making them ashamed." *Hōs tekna mou agapēta* ("as my beloved children") precedes the participle *nouthetōn* ("admonishing"), emphasizing that it is because of this beloved "father-children" relationship that Paul admonishes the Corinthians. *Tekna* is a metaphor in the sense that they are "beloved" to Paul, as if they were members of his own natural family.

Paul uses *noutheteō* eight times and *nouthesia* three times in the NT. *Noutheteō* has two basic meanings: (1) "to instruct": the content of *noutheteō/nouthesia* is knowledge/wisdom/Scripture, e.g., "(you are) filled with all knowledge (*gnōseōs*) and able to instruct (*nouthetein*) one another" (Rom 15:14; cf. 1 Cor 10:11); "your ear shall listen to wisdom (*sophias*); you shall also apply your heart to understanding, and you shall apply it to the instruction (*nouthetēsīn*) of your son" (Prov 2:2 LXX); (2) "to admonish/warn (against bad behavior or false teaching or evil people)": Paul admonishes the Ephesians against false teachers (Acts 20:31); "to admonish the undisciplined" (*noutheteite tous ataktous*) (1 Thess 5:14; cf. 2 Thess 3:15; Tit 3:10); church leaders have the responsibility and authority to admonish (1 Thess 5:12). *Noutheteō* parallels *didaskō*, e.g., "warning (*nouthetountes*) everyone and teaching (*didaskontes*) everyone with all wisdom" (Col 1:28; cf. 3:16).

The purpose of admonishment is for correction, e.g., "Therefore you rebuke (*elencheis*) offenders little by little, warn (*noutheteis*) them, and remind (*hypomimnēskōn*) them of the sins they are committing, that they may abandon their wickedness and believe in you, Lord!" (Wis 12:2). If people do not listen to an admonition/warning, they will be punished/judged: "they (children who turned to worship idols) who took no heed of admonition (*nouthetēthentes*) . . . were to experience a condemnation/judgment (*kprisin*) worthy of God" (Wis 12:26).

*Noutheteō* and *nouthesia* relate to discipline under authority: (1) discipline by the Lord/God: "bring them up in the discipline (*paideia*) and instruction/admonition (*nouthesia*) of the Lord" (Eph

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<sup>55</sup> "γὰρ," BDAG, BibleWorks v.9.

6:4); “discipline/admonition (*nouthetēma*) of the Almighty” (Job 5:17 LXX); “the Lord chastises (*mastigoi*) those who are close to him in order to admonish (*nouthetēsín*) them” (Jdt 8:27; cf. Wis 16:6; *paideuō* in Heb 12:10-11); (2) discipline by a father or king: “For when they had been tried, though only mildly chastised (*paideuomenoi*) . . . You tested your own people, admonishing (*nouthetōn*) them as a father “ (Wis 11:9, 10).

In the immediate context of 1 Corinthians 4:14, Paul warns the arrogant people who boast in their spiritual gifts (1 Cor 4:6-8, 18, 19). Thus, the meaning of *noutheteō* is “to admonish.”

In v.15, *ean* introduces a concessive clause “even if you may have . . .,” leading the readers to anticipate the statement in the following clause. The phrase *myrious paidagōgous* (“ten thousand guardians”) precedes the verb *echēte*, amplifying the hyperbole, which should not be understood literally. The hyperbole underscores a sharp contrast between the numerous “guardians in Christ” and the limited number of leaders who have the heart of fathers.

Paul uses *paidagōgos* three times (1 Cor 4:15; Gal 3:24, 25). The word is combined of *pais* (“boy”) and *agōgos* (“leader”). There is no other occurrence in the OT or LXX. *Paidagōgos* has three usages: (1) “a guard/keeper (for physical safety)”: “he (Cain) replied (to God), he was not his brother’s guardian (*paidagōgos*) or keeper (*phylax*)” (Josephus, *Ant.* 1.56; cf. Gen 4:9 LXX). Here *paidagōgos* is a synonym of *phylax* (“keeper”); (2) “a nursing guardian”: Jehu sent a letter to those “guardians” (*paidagōgois*) who brought up the children of Ahab (Josephus, *Ant.* 9.125). Here *paidagōgos* is a synonym of *tithēnos* (“nurse”). The LXX translates the Hebrew word *’omen* as *tithēnous* (“guardians”) (2 Kings 10:1), which also means “nurses” (cf. Num 11:12; Isa 49:23 LXX). *’omen* means a “guardian” who brings up a child of others, e.g., Mordecai “brought up” (*’omen*) Esther (Esth 2:7). The feminine participle of *’omen* means “a woman who nurses,” which the LXX renders *tithēnos* (2 Sam 4:4; Ruth 4:16 LXX); (3) “a guardian/superintendent” is “originally ‘boy-leader,’ the man, usually a slave (Plutarch, *Mor.* 4ab), whose duty it was to conduct a boy or youth (Plutarch, *Mor.* 439f) to and from school and to superintend his conduct.”<sup>56</sup> In the LXX, Esther is *threptē* (“a foster child”), whom Mordecai *epaideusen* (“trained/disciplined”).

In the Greco-Roman world, the practice of guardianship, putting a child under the oversight of a slave, started from the fifth century B.C.<sup>57</sup> The role of a guardian includes: (1) physical guard/keeper; (2) moral guide; (3) grammar tutor (not a teacher, but a teaching assistant); (4) one who carries out punishment/discipline; (5) social behavior guide.<sup>58</sup> A child would have a guardian at seven, and the guardianship would continue until the child grew up (at the age of twenty).<sup>59</sup>

Protagoras listed the four most influential people on a child’s moral shaping: mother and nurse, guardian and father (Plato, *Prot.* 325C-D).<sup>60</sup> When the boys became twelve years old, “the elderly men kept close watch of them, coming more frequently to their places of exercise, and observing their contests of strength and wit, not cursorily, but with the idea that they were all in a sense the fathers and guardians (*paidagōgos*) and governors of all the boys. In this way, at every fitting time and in every place, the boy who went wrong had someone to admonish (*nouthetounto*) and chastise (*kolazontos*) him” (Plutarch, *Lyc.* 17.1). Guardians (*paidagōgōn*), teachers, parents, elders, rulers, and the law would reprove (*oneidizontes*) and punish (*kolazontes*) the youth for the sake of correction (Philo, *Migr.* 1.116). Thus, a nurse/guardian (*tithēnous/paidagōgos*) would *paideuō* (“to train/discipline”) a child under his/her charge.

The verb *paideuō* occurs thirteen times in the NT, including seven times in Paul’s letters. It has three meanings: (1) “to train/instruct”: Moses was instructed (*epaideuthē*) in all Egyptian wisdom (Acts 7:22); Paul had been educated (*pepaideumenos*) under Gamaliel (Acts 22:3); and leaders are encouraged to “instruct (*paideuonta*) gently those who oppose the truth” (2 Tim 2:25; cf. Tit

<sup>56</sup> “παιδαγωγός,” BDAG, BibleWorks v.9.

<sup>57</sup> Norman H. Young, “*Paidagogos*: The Social Setting of a Pauline Metaphor,” *NovT.* 29, no. 2 (1987): 150.

<sup>58</sup> Ibid., 157–60.

<sup>59</sup> Ibid., 156.

<sup>60</sup> Ibid., 154.

2:12); (2) “to discipline/chastise”: “we are disciplined/chastised (*paideuometha*) so that we may not be condemned along with the world” (1 Cor 11:32); “All those I love, I rebuke and discipline (*paideuō*)” (Rev 3:19); (3) “to flog/punish”: Pilate decided to flog (*paideusas*) Jesus (Luke 23:16); Paul was punished (*paideuomenoi*) (2 Cor 6:9); Hymenaeus and Alexander were handed over to Satan that they may be punished (*paideuthōsin*) (1 Tim 1:20). The noun *paideutēs* means: (1) “a teacher” (Rom 2:20); (2) “one who disciplines”: an earthly father is a *paideutēs* to his child (Heb 12:9).

In 1 Corinthians 4:15, since *paidagōgos* is modified by *en Christō* (“in Christ”), this *paidagōgos* is not identical to a Hellenistic “guardian.” Paul borrows the word from the Hellenistic culture to depict “Christian guardians/instructors.” “Guardians” is modified by *en Christō*, indicating that Paul is not abasing the status of these guardians (or leaders) in the Corinthian church, or else he may make the division worse in the church. What Paul accuses is that these guardians have not fulfilled their responsibility to admonish or discipline those who have done immoral things (1 Cor 5:3, 13).

The pleonasm of *en Christō* in v.15 reminds the recipients of the basis of their relationship with Paul. *En Christō Iēsou* (“in Christ Jesus”) and *dia tou euangeliou* (“through the gospel”) precedes the verb *egennēsa* (“I begot”), emphasizing Paul’s very reason and means to be a spiritual father. *Egō* is added to emphasize Paul himself is one of the few spiritual fathers. *Hymas* (“you”) precedes the verb *egennēsa*, indicating the emphasis on the recipients. Biologically, one child has only one father. Thus, Paul uses *gennaō* to emphasize his unique relationship with the Corinthians because he “laid the foundation” through the gospel (v.15; cf. 1 Cor 3:10; Acts 18:1-18),<sup>61</sup> an action even those who question Paul’s apostleship could not deny (1 Cor 9:1-3). Paul’s emphasis sounds like this, “It is I who begot you, and it is you whom I begot.” This spiritual father-son relationship in Christ is the very basis on which Paul admonishes the Corinthians.

Then Paul continues his admonishment in two different ways: (1) positively, he exhorts them to imitate his way of life (vv.16-17); (2) negatively, he warns the arrogant of his right to discipline them if they do not correct themselves (vv.19-21).

In 1 Corinthians 4:16, the object *mimētai mou* (“my imitators”) precedes the verb *ginesthe* (“to be”), focusing on what the recipients should be. The verb *mimeomai* means “to imitate/mimic” something a person observes about someone else. *Mimeomai/mimētēs* does not occur in the LXX. The noun *mimētēs* occurs five times in Paul’s letters, and once in Hebrew 6:12. The verb *mimeomai* occurs five times in the NT (2 Thess 3:7, 9; Heb 13:7; 3 John 1:11).

In the Greco-Roman ethical sphere, *mimeomai/mimētēs* emphasizes imitating people of good virtue, e.g., “imitate the character of a just father (*mimou tropous patros*); for this is the fairest glory for children, when the child of a good father resembles its parents in character” (Euripides, *Hel.* 940).<sup>62</sup> Parents must teach by their examples.<sup>63</sup> Similarly, in the Jewish background, virtuous parents are examples for children to imitate. A virtuous man left virtuous children who became his imitators (*mimētas*) (Josephus, *Ant.* 1.68). In Genesis 28:6, 7, Jacob listened to (*ēkousen*) his parents and went into Mesopotamia. Philo explains that “he (Jacob) listened not to their voice, nor to their words, for it was fitting that he who was an imitator of their actions should be a practicer of virtue (*biou mimētēn edei ton askētēn*), not a listener to speeches” (Philo, *Congre.* 1.70; cf. Jas 1:25). Thus, in 1 Corinthians 4:14-21, it is natural for Paul’s recipients to understand *mimētēs* in v.16 as to follow Paul as their virtuous father.

There are four meanings of *mimeomai/mimētēs* in the NT: (1) to endure suffering for faith (1 Thess 2:14); (2) to work hard, so as not to burden the church (2 Thess 3:7, 8); (3) to serve humbly

61 Gordon Fee asserts that this metaphor “intends simply to distinguish his (Paul’s) own relationship to them from that of all others, including of course Apollos and Peter,” see Fee, *The First Epistle to the Corinthians*, 185.

62 Michaelis, “μῖμομαι, μιμητής, συμμιμητής,” *TDNT* 4:660-61.

63 Bertram, «παιδεύω, παιδεία, παιδευτής, ἀπαιδευτος, παιδαγωγός,» *TDNT* 5:596.



by sacrificing rights (2 Thess 3:9); (4) generally speaking, to follow the good examples of the saints (Heb 6:12; 3 John 1:11).

In the immediate context of 1 Corinthians 4:14-21, *mimētēs* has a specific meaning, i.e., to follow Paul as a humble servant and endure hardships and persecutions for the sake of Christ (1 Cor 3:21-4:2; 4:9-13).<sup>64</sup> Paul exhorts the Corinthians to “be imitators of me, as I am of Christ” (1 Cor 11:1). Paul exemplifies himself as a humble servant (cf. 1 Cor 3:22; 4:1, 11-13), just as was Jesus Christ (Mark 10:45).<sup>65</sup> Philo mentions that humans should imitate God (*mimēsamenous theon*) in piety and fulfillment of one’s duty (Philo, *Decal.* 1.111); to imitate God as much as possible (*mimeisthai theon kath hoson hoion*, Philo, *Virt.* 1.168); “what can be a greater good than for mortal men to imitate (*mimeisthai*) the everlasting God?” (Philo, *Spec.* 4.73). Andrew Clark points out that Paul’s deliberate use of non-status leadership vocabulary models a paradigm of leadership for the Corinthians to imitate.<sup>66</sup>

In a broader context, *mimētēs* has one more meaning—to be followers of Paul in teaching and practicing.<sup>67</sup> Paul reminds the Corinthians to focus on the cross of Christ and the power of God, rather than on Greek wisdom (1 Cor 1:17-2:5). Before 1 Corinthians, Paul wrote 1 Thessalonians to commend the disciples that they became imitators of the apostles in preaching the word of the Lord and living out the faith (1 Thess 1:6-8). Robert L. Plummer points out that the imitation includes actively proclaiming the gospel in both words and deeds.<sup>68</sup> Kathy Ehrensperger posits that Paul’s imitation language is not to endorse his apostleship, but to guide the church members into the life in Christ, which counters the value of authority and power in the Greco-Roman society.<sup>69</sup> Paul’s leadership is to reproduce imitators of his words and deeds.

Then Paul begins to warn the arrogant in the Corinthian church. In 1 Corinthians 4:17 *mou teknon agapēton* (“my beloved child”—referring to Timothy) echoes *tekna mou agapēta* (“my beloved children”—referring to the Corinthians) in v.14. In v.17, Paul depicts a specific example of a spiritual father-child relationship between himself and Timothy. Joshua is Moses’ “most excellent pupil and the imitator (*mimētēs*) of his amiable and excellent disposition” (Philo, *Virt.* 1:66). Similarly, Timothy becomes a beloved spiritual child and an imitator of Paul. Paul sends Timothy “to remind” the Corinthians of Paul’s “ways of living, the ones in Christ Jesus,” which Paul is teaching everywhere. David E. Garland suggests that Timothy will remind the Corinthians by living in the same way as Paul did.<sup>70</sup> Paul not only recruits Timothy into his ministry team (Acts 16:3), but also gives this younger leader many opportunities to grow in ministry.

*Hymas* precedes the verb *anamnēsei* (“he will remind”), emphasizing Timothy’s focus—it is “you.” Paul is trying to convey a humble servant leadership. The Greek word for “ways” seems to parallel the Hebrew word *derech*. The book of Proverbs frequently teaches how to choose the right and wise way, the way of life.<sup>71</sup> Gordon Fee asserts that Paul’s usage of “ways” reflects Paul’s Jewish background because it parallels the teaching of Torah.<sup>72</sup> However, Paul’s “ways” has further meaning other than “the ways” in Torah and Proverbs. In 1 Corinthians, Paul presents his own

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64 David E. Garland, *1 Corinthians* (Baker Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament; Grand Rapids, Mich.: Baker Academic, 2003), 144.

65 See William David Spencer, “The Power in Paul’s Teaching (1 Cor 4:9-20),” *JETS* 32, no. 1 (1989): 51–61.

66 Andrew D. Clarke, *Secular and Christian Leadership in Corinth: A Socio-Historical and Exegetical Study of 1 Corinthians 1-6* (Eugene, Oreg.: Wipf & Stock, 2006), 118, 125.

67 Gordon Fee suggests that the imitation includes both the example and the teaching from Christ (cf. 1 Thess 1:5; Luke 6:22-23), see Fee, *The First Epistle to the Corinthians*, 187.

68 Robert L. Plummer, “Imitation of Paul and the Church’s Missionary Role in 1 Corinthians,” *JETS* 44, no. 2 (2001): 234.

69 Kathy Ehrensperger, “Be Imitators of Me as I Am of Christ: A Hidden Discourse of Power and Domination in Paul?” *Lexington Theological Quarterly* 38, no. 4 (2003): 257.

70 Garland, *1 Corinthians*, 147.

71 e.g., Prov 1:15, 31; 2:8, 12, 13, 20; 3:6; cf. Pss 1:1, 6; 18:21.

72 Fee, *The First Epistle to the Corinthians*, 189.

ways in Christ by combining words and deeds,<sup>73</sup> e.g., to endure the hardships and sufferings for the sake of faith (1 Cor 4:9-13), to seek the interest of others (10:24, 33), and to build up others (14:5, 19). The repetition of *en Christō Iēsou* draws the recipients' attention again to Christ, rather than to Paul himself. The phrase *en Christō Iēsou* modifies *tas hodous mou* ("my ways"), indicating that Paul's ways are not his own, and the essence is in Christ, i.e., to be imitator of Christ (cf. 11:1). *Pantachou en pasē ekklēsia* ("everywhere in every church") precedes *didaskō* ("I am teaching"), underlining Paul's consistency of teaching everywhere, not just in Corinth.

*Pephysiōmenōn* ("the arrogant ones") in 1 Corinthians 4:19 repeats *ephysiōthēsan* ("they were arrogant") in v.18. This pleonasm emphasizes that Paul's target is not all the recipients, but "the arrogant" among them. This is a gentle reminder to those who are not arrogant, but may have been influenced by the arrogant people, or may be so afraid of the arrogant that they dare not to say anything against the immoral things that had happened. Paul is not negating the actions of all the disciples in the Corinthian church. Thus, he is trying to bring the disciples closer, rather than distance them by being harsh to them. *Dynamei* (the "power" in God) in v.20 contrasts with *dynamin* (the power in word for the arrogant) in v.19. This echoes Paul's emphasis on the power of God in Christ and the Holy Spirit (1:17, 24; 2:4, 5).<sup>74</sup> Paul did not use "lofty speech" (2:1) as "the arrogant" did.

*Rhabdos* has the following meanings: (1) a normal rod for travel (Matt 10:10; Mark 6:8; Luke 9:3); (2) a rod of a shepherd (Gen 30:38; Lev 27:32; Heb 11:21); (3) a rod of a ruler/king (a sign of power/authority) (Esth 4:11; Heb 1:8; Rev 2:27; 12:5; 19:15; Josephus, *Ant.* 5.284; *J. W.* 2.365); (4) a measuring rod (Rev 11:1); (5) a rod of discipline/punishment (Prov 22:15; 23:13, 14; Isa 10:24); (6) a rod of divine power (Exod 14:16; Plutarch, *Rom.* 22). According to Plato, "both children and guardians are kept in order under the rod of admonition/discipline by those in control of education" (*taisi de kai paidagōgois kai tō pleistō ochlō rhabdou kosmousēs hē nouthetēsis egigneto*) (Plato, *Leg.* 3.700c). Even guardians are under the rod of discipline. In the Greco-Roman culture, a father grants a guardian the right to punish a child for wrongdoing or disobedience. Guardians usually use a whip or a cuff for discipline, rather than a rod.<sup>75</sup>

In 1 Corinthians 4:21, Paul uses *rhabdos* as "a rod of discipline."<sup>76</sup> Paul uses a "rod," rather than a "whip" or "cuff." His focus is on correcting the arrogant, or those who regard themselves as "guardians" in the Corinthian church. Paul has superior authority for discipline, just like a child's father (and the master of a guardian) has the right of discipline over a guardian. Paul also means "a rod of divine power" to the arrogant people, because he contrasts the power of their word to the power of God. Paul warns that he will discipline them if they persist in not repenting.

In 4:21, *en rhabdō* precedes *elthō*, stressing Paul's power to discipline the arrogant when he comes. It sounds like he is addressing the arrogant directly. However, punishment is not Paul's ultimate goal, as he later says that he refrained from coming again to Corinth for another painful visit, in order to spare them (from rebuke or punishment) (2 Cor 1:23; 2:1). Despite the Roman proverb "spare the rod and spoil the child,"<sup>77</sup> Paul still wants to come to the Corinthians "with love and a gentle spirit." Obviously, the Corinthians have not corrected their wrong practices in a timely fashion after they received the letter of 1 Corinthians, because Paul writes another letter "out of much affliction and anguish of heart and with many tears" to show his abundant love (2 Cor

73 Fee cites Paul's usage of *peripatein* ("to walk") as a metaphor for ethical behavior and asserts that "Paul's doctrine includes ethics, or it is no doctrine at all," *Ibid.*

74 Spencer points out that the power Paul mentions in 1 Cor 4:19 is Paul's sharing in Christ's sufferings, see William David Spencer, "The Power in Paul's Teaching (1 Cor 4:9-20)," 51.

75 Young corrects the wrong impression that the hooked staff being held by a guardian (painted on a vase) is "a corrective rod," rather, "it is a sign of freedom," i.e., the slave guardian is set free because of his faithful guardianship, see Young, "Paidagogos," 163.

76 See also Fee, *The First Epistle to the Corinthians*, 193.

77 Eyben, "Fathers and Sons," 123.

2:4). Paul is also well aware that harshness may lose the affection of his spiritual children, which happens between a biological father and his children in the Greco-Roman world.<sup>78</sup> Thus, he exhorts the Corinthians not to overwhelm those who had caused Paul pain, but to forgive and comfort and reaffirm love for them (2 Cor 2:5-7). Paul exemplifies such mercy by writing 2 Corinthians in great love, so that “when I come I may not have to be severe in my use of the authority that the Lord has given me for building up and not for tearing down” (2 Cor 13:10). What a patient and gracious spiritual parent! Eyben’s study shows that, since the first century B.C., “Roman writers and practicing fathers sought a balance between harsh discipline and indulgent permissiveness.”<sup>79</sup> Paul’s love also reflects the expectation of an ideal father in the Greco-Roman world—“the word ‘father’ stands for love, for reverence, for indulgence (tolerance and forgiving in their attitude to the young).”<sup>80</sup> Fee points out that Paul’s “gentleness” reflects Jesus’ teaching and model of “gentleness.”<sup>81</sup> John Stott concludes that “the authentic characteristic of Christian leaders . . . is not severity but gentleness. We are to be loving fathers and mothers of the church family rather than strict disciplinarians.”<sup>82</sup>

### Conclusion of 1 Corinthians 4:14-21

In 1 Corinthians 4:14-21, Paul’s image as a spiritual father functions in a chronological order: (1) he begot the spiritual children through the gospel of Jesus Christ; (2) he sets an example by his way of life; (3) he exhorts his disciples to be his imitators; (4) he warns against wrongdoings; (5) he reserves the right of discipline with the power of God, but he gently gives them time to correct their behavior; (6) he will discipline/punish those who do not correct it.

Paul asserts his fatherhood, rather than apostleship, to restore his affectionate father-children relationship with the Corinthians, and to admonish them to imitate his model as a servant leader.<sup>83</sup> Paul aims to “wean the church from his active nurture and guidance” by reproducing local leaders,<sup>84</sup> who would be his imitators, as he is imitator of Christ (1 Cor 11:1).

### Greco-Roman and Jewish Historical Background

Paul’s usage of parental images reflects his familiarity with the family system in the Greco-Roman society, in which children should honor and obey their parents “as demanded not only by nature but also by the gods” (Plato, *Laws* 11.931).<sup>85</sup> A father has the authority to constrain his son to obedience “as long as he was unmarried or under eighteen years of age or until his name was entered in the public registers.”<sup>86</sup> “The father held the highest social and legal standing in the family and possessed power over his children and property.”<sup>87</sup> Young children “often slept in the slave room with their wet nurse” (Soranus, *Gyn.* 2.19-20); mothers became “involved more directly in the later education of their children . . . especially as related to religious matters and philosophical

78 Ibid., 139.

79 Ibid., 142.

80 Ibid., 120, 126.

81 Fee, *The First Epistle to the Corinthians*, 193.

82 John R. W Stott, *Basic Christian Leadership: Biblical Models of Church, Gospel, and Ministry* (Downers Grove, Ill.: InterVarsity, 2002), 111.

83 “Paul’s customary family image for his relationship with the Corinthians has no element of hierarchy or authority. . . It expresses that he admonishes them out of a deep affection and commitment toward them, hoping to evoke a similarly affectionate response. And he reasserts his fatherhood to them in order to restore the value of his life and leadership as a model for the Corinthians in the face of local denigration of his way of living,” John L. Hiigel, *Leadership in 1 Corinthians: A Case Study in Paul’s Ecclesiology* (Lewiston, N.Y.: Edwin Mellen, 2003), 118.

84 Ibid., 143.

85 Shaye J. D. Cohen, *The Jewish Family in Antiquity* (Brown Judaic Studies 289; Atlanta, Ga.: Scholars, 1993), 53.

86 Eyben, “Fathers and Sons,” 115.

87 Lynn H. Cohick, “Women, Children, and Families in the Greco-Roman World,” in *The World of the New Testament: Cultural, Social, and Historical Contexts* (eds. Joel B. Green and Lee Martin McDonald; Grand Rapids, Mich.: Baker Academic, 2013), 180.

virtues.”<sup>88</sup>

Greco-Roman education focused on Hellenistic philosophy and rhetoric.<sup>89</sup> In contrast, Jewish education in the first century was family-based,<sup>90</sup> Torah-centered<sup>91</sup> and virtue oriented.<sup>92</sup> Jewish children started their education first at home by learning “the decisive stories . . . A father is to teach the Law and the Prophets, sing psalms and recite proverbs (4 Macc 18:10-19).”<sup>93</sup> In addition, Proverbs and Sirach 30:1-13 show that parents were to discipline their children.<sup>94</sup> Philo emphasized parental discipline too (Philo, *Spec.* 2.29, 236, 240). The purpose of Jewish education was mainly for their religious life—how to “walk” a right way before Yahweh, i.e., to “fear the Lord.”<sup>95</sup> Philo listed Jewish children’s responsibilities to their parents: “(1) obedience (Philo, *Spec.* 2.236); (2) fear (Philo, *Spec.* 2.239; cf. Lev 19:3); (3) courtesy (Philo, *Spec.* 2.237-38); (4) care/nurture (Philo, *Decal.* 111, 113, 116-119).”<sup>96</sup> Philo also showed the importance of family love between parents and children (Philo, *Spec.* 2.239).<sup>97</sup>

Among the Greek words we have studied, there are many parallels between Paul’s parental images and Jewish usage of family language. Based on the study of kinship languages in Sirach, Wisdom, Philo, Qumran, and Josephus, Birge concludes, “During Paul’s lifetime, Palestinian and diaspora Jews applied kinship language to persons and situations that did not fulfill the literal criteria of blood relationship.”<sup>98</sup> A teacher of Torah is regarded as the parent of his student.<sup>99</sup> Gaventa finds similarities between 1 Thessalonians 2:7 and a passage in Qumran—“the teacher of Righteousness describes himself as the father of the pious:

Thou hast made me to be a father to all the children of piety,  
A foster-father to men of good omen.  
They open their mouth as the nursling [to his mother’s breasts]  
And rejoice like a child in the lap of his foster-father (1QH 7:19-23, 25).”<sup>100</sup>

In short, Paul’s parental language in 1 Corinthians 2 and 1 Thessalonians 4 is relevant to his recipients’ Greco-Roman culture, and is deeply rooted in Jewish family culture.

### Biblical Context

Most scholars have studied the Greco-Roman culture to explain Paul’s parental images, but seldom have they attempted to explain them from Paul’s Jewish background. Yet, Paul has been trained as a Pharisee (Acts 22:3; Phil 3:5), so it is necessary to study the parental images in the OT

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<sup>88</sup> Ibid.

<sup>89</sup> Ben Witherington III, “Education in the Greco-Roman World,” in *The World of the New Testament*, 192–93.

<sup>90</sup> “Fathers were the primary educators of sons, in keeping with the Torah (Exod 13:8, 14; Deut 6:20-21; cf. Prov 4:1, 10-11), but mothers and extended family were also involved (Prov 1:8; 6:20; 31:1; Tob 1:8; 2 Tim 3:15). The education of daughters was largely in the hands of mothers, but, as with sons, both parents could be involved (Sus 3). In addition, children received some education in public gatherings (synagogues), during pilgrimages to Jerusalem (cf. Luke 2:41-51), and from visiting scribes, priest, and teachers (Deut 31:12; 33:10),” Ibid., 326.

<sup>91</sup> Both Philo (e.g., Philo, *Legat.* 210) and Josephus (e.g., Josephus, *Ag. Ap.* 1.60) emphasized Torah-centered education. Ibid., 327–28; for a detailed discussion see James L. Crenshaw, “Education in Ancient Israel,” *JBL* 104, no. 4 (1985): 601–15; Lisa Wilson Davison, “Education in Ancient Israel: Across the Deadening Silence,” *Lexington Theological Quarterly* 34, no. 3 (1999): 190–91; Nili Shupak, “Learning Methods in Ancient Israel,” *VT* 53, no. 3 (2003): 416–26.

<sup>92</sup> Green and McDonald, *The World of the New Testament*, 325–27.

<sup>93</sup> Cohen, *The Jewish Family in Antiquity*, 43.

<sup>94</sup> Ibid., 45.

<sup>95</sup> Pss 15:4; 22:23; 27:1; 33:8; 34:9; 115:11, 13; 118:4; 135:20; Prov 1:7, 29; 2:5; 3:7; 8:13; 9:10; 10:27; 14:26, 27; 15:16, 33; 16:6; 19:23; 22:4; 23:17; 24:21; 29:25.

<sup>96</sup> Cohen, *The Jewish Family in Antiquity*, 79–80.

<sup>97</sup> Ibid., 82.

<sup>98</sup> Birge, *The Language of Belonging*, 150.

<sup>99</sup> “The *b. Sanh.* 19b says, ‘Whoever teaches Torah to his fellow’s son is credited by Scripture as if he begat him,’” see footnote 126 in Mary Katherine Birge, *The Language of Belonging*, 35.

<sup>100</sup> Gaventa, “Apostles as Babes and Nurses in 1 Thessalonians 2:7,” 202–3.

and their legacy in the NT.

### ***Old Testament Context***

#### **Parental Role in the Old Testament**

The prototype of Jewish parental responsibility to teach children is Moses' commandment to the Israelites, "You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your might. And these words that I command you today shall be on your heart. You shall teach them (the commandment from Yahweh) *diligently* to your children, and shall talk of them when you sit in your house, and when you walk by the way, and when you lie down, and when you rise" (Deut 6:5-7). Jewish family education in the OT focuses on loving Yahweh the only one God. It is the parents' responsibility to teach their children diligently. The Jews recite the Shema every day (cf. *m. Ber.* 1:3). A father instructs his son by expounding on Scriptures (*m. Pesah* 10:4; cf. Deut 26:5). Parents have the right and responsibility to admonish and discipline their children to fear the Lord and walk in the way of life (Prov 1:8; 4:1, 4; 6:20). Proverb 31 is a good example of how Lemuel's mother taught him how to be a good king and to seek an excellent wife who fears the Lord.

#### **Spiritual Parents in the Old Testament**

In the OT, a wisdom teacher claims to be a parent over those who are taught (usually young people)<sup>101</sup> in the sense that the teacher fulfills the parent's role of admonishing. Paul's role as a spiritual father to all the disciples follows this tradition.

An apprentice of a prophet addresses the prophet as a "father" (1 Sam 3:6; 2 Kgs 2:12), indicating their close relationship through teaching and apprenticeship, and the continuing ministry that the disciple will inherit from the prophet. Their relationship is even closer than a wisdom teacher to his listeners. Timothy's relationship with Paul is more like Elisha's with Elijah.

#### **The Image of Parents concerning God in the Old Testament**

There are parental metaphors concerning God in the OT. As a father, God begot the Israelites, and as a mother, God gave birth in labor (Deut 32:18).<sup>102</sup> God takes care of his people as a female bird protects her young brood (cf. Deut 32:11). God disciplines his people as a father disciplines his children: "consider the discipline of the LORD your God, his greatness, his mighty hand and his outstretched arm" (Deut 11:2); "Behold, blessed is the one whom God reproves; therefore despise not the discipline of the Almighty" (Job 5:17). The father-son metaphors convey "the intimacy, love, and care of a parent and the power of a ruler."<sup>103</sup> God commands the Israelites to imitate him—"be holy, for I am holy" (Lev 11:44).

### ***New Testament Context***

#### **The Legacy of Emphasis on Education/Discipline from the Old Testament**

Paul's teaching about parental education/discipline in other letters reflects the influence of the OT: "Fathers (or parents), do not provoke your children to anger, but bring them up in the discipline and instruction of the Lord" (Eph 6:4; cf. Gen 18:19; Deut 6:7; Prov 22:6; 29:17). Paul urges Titus to teach older women to train the young women how to love their husbands and children (Tit 2:3-5). Paul also teaches as does a wisdom teacher in the OT: "Children, obey your parents in everything, for this pleases the Lord" (Col 3:20). Paul also wants Titus to teach the younger men to be self-controlled (Tit 2:6).

#### **Spiritual Fathers in the New Testament**

Paul is a spiritual father to Timothy (1 Tim. 1:1; Phil 2:22), and to Titus (Tit 1:4), and to

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101 Prov 1:8, 10, 15; 2:1; 3:1, 11, 21; 4:10, 5:1; 6:1; 7:1; 23:15; 24:13; 27:11.

102 Aida Besançon Spencer et al., *The Goddess Revival* (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Baker Books, 1995), 112–13.

103 Ibid., 119.



Onesimus (Phlm 1:10). Peter is a spiritual father to Mark (1 Pet 5:13).

### **Is Paul's Parental Image Violating Jesus' Teaching?**

Jesus warned his disciples against the bad examples of the scribes and the Pharisees, who do not practice what they preach, but long for respect and honor (Matt 23:1-3). Thus, Jesus warned the disciples, not to be called rabbi, or father, or instructor (Matt 23:6-10). Then he pointed out the core lesson—"the greatest among you shall be your servant. Whoever exalts himself will be humbled, and whoever humbles himself will be exalted" (Matt 23: 11, 12).

Is Paul violating Jesus' teaching? What Jesus warns against is unilateral authority or self-aggrandizing fatherhood.<sup>104</sup> Paul's intention as a spiritual father is not to exalt himself as did those scribes and the Pharisees who opposed Jesus. Paul's usage of infant images embodies his humble servanthood. His affectionate usage of paternal and maternal images justifies his spiritual parenthood.

Our study of the Greco-Roman and Jewish historical background and relevant Scriptures shows that the parental images in 1 Thessalonians 2:5-12 and 1 Corinthians 4:14-21 draw resources from both Jewish tradition and the Greco-Roman culture. Paul draws their core value from the OT tradition, and renews them with the new family language "in Christ,"<sup>105</sup> and communicates their significance in the Greco-Roman rhetoric and family culture.<sup>106</sup>

### **Summary**

#### ***Similarities between 1 Thessalonians 2:5-12 and 1 Corinthians 4:14-21***

We find similarities between the parental images in 1 Thessalonians 2:5-12 and 1 Corinthians 4:14-21: (1) the spiritual parental relationship is based on the gospel of God (1 Thess 2:8; 1 Cor 4:15); (2) the spiritual father-children relationship is Christ/God centered (1 Thess 2:5, 7, 8, 9, 10, 12; 1 Cor 4:15, 17, 19); (3) the goal is for the spiritual children to live a Christian life (1 Thess 2:12; 1 Cor 4:16, 17); (4) the spiritual parent has the authority/power from God to discipline (1 Thess 2:7; 1 Cor 4:19-21); (5) the spiritual parent sets up good examples for the disciples to imitate (1 Thess 2:9-10; 1 Cor 4:17); (6) the spiritual parent has deep love toward the disciples (1 Thess 2:7, 8, 11; 1 Cor 4:14, 21); (7) the spiritual parent is serving humbly (1 Thess 2:7; 1 Cor 4:17, 21).

#### ***The Difference in Paul's Approach between 1 Thessalonians 2:5-12 and 1 Corinthians 4:14-21***

The difference in the two passages is how Paul treats the two churches. We have seen the different status of the Corinthian church and the Thessalonian church (see Historical Background). The Thessalonians in general are doing well and are under afflictions, so they need a mild reminder, timely encouragement, and comfort. In contrast, some of the Corinthians are arrogant. Paul, as a nursing-mother, feeds his spiritual children differently and appropriately according to their level of maturity and their situation.

#### ***Paul's Model of Leadership Principles***

The study of 1 Thessalonians 2:5-12 and 1 Corinthians 4:14-21 reveals Paul's leadership principles in three aspects: parental relationship, servant leadership, and teamwork leadership.

##### **Parental Relationship**

According to Paul's teachings and example as a spiritual parent, a leader should do the following things: (1) establish the parent-children relationship through the gospel of God; (2) maintain a Christ/God-centered relationship; (3) set examples (e.g., to serve in integrity and innocence, and work diligently); (4) reproduce imitators in words and deeds; (5) love his/her spiritual children; (6) fulfill parental responsibility by feeding/teaching them properly, encouraging

104 See also Stott, *Basic Christian Leadership*, 110.

105 Birge, *The Language of Belonging*, 183–84.

106 Ibid., 150.

them to grow continually, comforting them affectionately, admonishing them in a timely way, patiently and gently, and disciplining them firmly.

Robert Banks, a home church movement leader, points out that Paul's metaphors of "family" or "household" are significant. Thus, the leadership in the church should make certain that the church lives as a "close-knit family."<sup>107</sup>

### **Servant Leadership**

Jesus teaches his disciples about servant leadership: (1) to sacrifice and to suffer (Matt 20:22; Mark 10:35-45); (2) not to exercise authority, but to be servants (Matt 20:25-28; Mark 10:42-44; Luke 22:24-27); (3) to serve humbly (Mark 9:33-37; Luke 22:24-27; John 13:14, 15).<sup>108</sup> Jesus' servant leadership is contrary to the established, entitled leadership of the Roman forces and the hierarchy of Jewish religious leaders.<sup>109</sup>

Similarly, Paul combats the worldly leadership in the church.<sup>110</sup> He imitates Jesus Christ's model of servant leadership and sets up a model for the Corinthians and the Thessalonians to imitate, which is a powerful way to transform the leadership in both churches.<sup>111</sup> A servant leader should sacrifice his or her own interests and rights, forsake his or her authority and status, serve humbly, even suffer greatly and continually for the sake of the disciples.

### **Teamwork Leadership**

Jesus himself has set a model of servant leadership by working with a team.<sup>112</sup> The NT has demonstrated plural leadership in the early churches (Acts 11:30; 14:23; 15:2; 20:17; Phil 1:1; 1 Thess 5:12; 1 Tim 3:1-14; 5:17-25; Titus 1:5; Heb 13:17).<sup>113</sup> The practical reasons for a plurality of leaders are: "(1) balancing people's weaknesses, (2) lightening the work load, and (3) providing accountability."<sup>114</sup>

Paul imitates Jesus' leadership by working in teams. Paul's ministry to the Thessalonians includes Silvanus and Timothy (1 Thess 1:1). He used the first person plural pronouns frequently in 1 Thessalonians to stress the oneness of this leadership team. To the Corinthians, Paul has two leadership teams: (1) a closely-tied team, including Sosthenes (1 Cor 1:1), Timothy (4:17; 16:10, 11) and Stephanas (1:16; 16:15), and (2) a loosely-tied team, including Apollos (16:12) and Cephas/Peter (1:12; 3:22), and Aquila and Prisca (16:19). It is noticeable that Timothy is both a spiritual child, and a coworker/leader to Paul. Paul commends Timothy and entrusts him with opportunities for leadership with the Thessalonians and the Corinthians (1 Cor 4:17; 16:10, 11; 1 Thess 3:2). A Christian leader is to lead in teams, and to bring up younger leaders, offer them opportunity to grow in ministry, and bring them into the leadership team.

### ***Application in the Chinese House Church Context***

John Stott sharply reminds us that "our model of leadership is often shaped more by culture

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107 Alexander Strauch, *Biblical Eldership: An Urgent Call to Restore Biblical Church Leadership* (3rd ed.; Littleton, Colo.: Lewis & Roth, 1995), 110.

108 Jerry C. Wofford, *Transforming Christian Leadership: 10 Exemplary Church Leaders* (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Baker Books, 1999), 158.

109 Efraim Agosto, *Servant Leadership: Jesus & Paul* (St. Louis, Mo.: Chalice, 2005), 200.

110 Ibid., 201.

111 Strauch, *Biblical Eldership*, 96.

112 Wilkes summarizes seven principles of Jesus' leadership: "(1) Jesus humbled himself and allowed God to exalt him; (2) Jesus followed his Father's will rather than sought a position; (3) Jesus defined greatness as being a servant and being first as becoming a slave; (4) Jesus risked serving others because he trusted that he was God's Son; (5) Jesus left his place at the head table to serve the needs of others; (6) Jesus shared responsibility and authority with those he called to lead; (7) Jesus built a team to carry out a worldwide vision," C. Gene Wilkes, *Jesus on Leadership: Timeless Wisdom on Servant Leadership* (Wheaton, Ill.: Tyndale House, 1998), 11-12.

113 Strauch, *Biblical Eldership*, 104.

114 Ibid., 109.

than by Christ. Yet many cultural models of leadership are incompatible with the servant imagery taught and exhibited by the Lord Jesus . . . these alien cultural models are often transplanted uncritically into the church and its hierarchy, . . . in East Asia [by] the Confucian legacy of the teacher's unchallengeable authority."<sup>115</sup> Chinese house church leaders and para-church leaders are influenced by worldly leadership. Unilateral patriarchal leadership (over-parenting) is deeply rooted in Chinese traditional culture.<sup>116</sup> Under-parenting in institutionalized leadership is influenced by western leadership style and pragmatism.

To resolve such problems in Chinese house churches and para-churches, we need to examine the secular factors that have crept into our models of leadership to eradicate them, and restore a biblical model, imitating Paul's leadership in his model of parental relationship, servant leadership, and teamwork ministry.

Jet Li received his Master of Divinity from Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary, South Hamilton. He took two exegesis courses taught by Dr. Aída Besançon Spencer. Thanks to her teaching, mentoring, encouraging, and guiding in the past two years, this article came into being. Dr. William Spencer and Dr. Aída Spencer helped editing this paper. Jet was led to Christ by an American short mission team to Beijing in 2002, when he was planning to make bombs to kill corrupted officials. He had since served in Chinese house churches for seven years before he began the study of the M. Div. He has the burden to multiply leaders to multiply house churches at home and abroad, in partnership with the global church.

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<sup>115</sup> Stott, *Basic Christian Leadership*, 113.

<sup>116</sup> The core framework of Confucianism is the "Confulegalistic Hierarchical Ethical Order" (i.e., three principles and five virtues). The three rules are: ruler guides subject, father guides son, and husband guides wife. These rules demand absolute obedience of children to their father, until the father dies. The five constant virtues of Confucianism are benevolence, righteousness, propriety, wisdom, and fidelity. Even after the death of the father, children shall worship their father and forefathers to show their fidelity to them. The Greco-Roman fathers have their authority over their children before they get married. Thus, Chinese traditional culture has influenced house church leadership more than the Greco-Roman culture to the first century churches.

## REACHING FOR THE NEW JERUSALEM

### A Biblical and Theological Framework for the City

Edited by

SEONG HYUN PARK

AÍDA BESANÇON SPENCER

WILLIAM DAVID SPENCER

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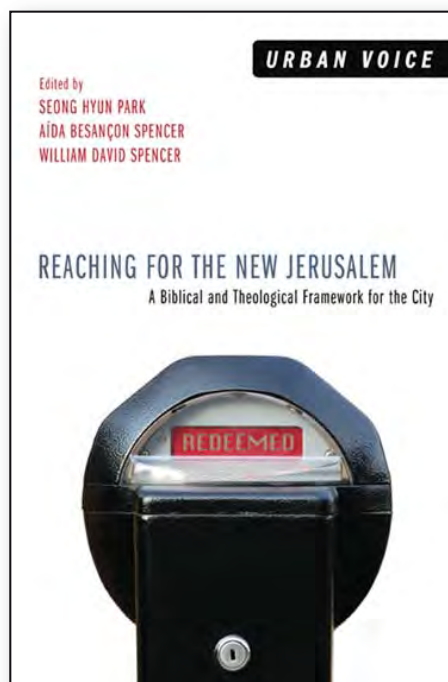
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# Intentional Teaching<sup>1</sup>

WILLIAM DAVID SPENCER

When I was invited to address a group of doctoral candidates on how to teach successfully in seminary, I was nonplussed. After all, thirty-five years of seminary teaching in three different seminary settings may sound like a lot at first, but it is hardly unusual in a campus known for the longevity of its teaching staff, several of whom surpass me by two decades. “It’s the intentionality with which you teach,” it was explained to me. “That’s what we want you to share. Talk about the system you developed.”

It is true that over the years I have tried to become completely intentional in the way I approach this ministry in general and my classes in particular. I have picked up good ideas along the way and have systemized them into what I hope has become a fully faceted approach that helps all the students I have the privilege to teach.

I have come to realize that teaching begins with a compound question. I ask continually: what am I doing here and how do I measure my success?

What I am doing here is serving the Lord, so I measure my success by what pleases the Lord.

How am I serving the Lord? I have been given the task of moving students ahead in their mastery of the field of theology and their ability to apply the findings of that field to ministry, taking each one where each is located when enrolling in my class and moving each forward in the understanding of and ability to perform successfully within the subject matter.

I please the Lord when, by model, choice of content, and instructional methodology, I maximize my positive results.

So, when I am able to do so, I begin with environment, attempting to turn my classroom itself into a learning tool.

However, one obstacle I continually face is that I cannot make my classroom a total learning environment as I could when I was teaching in a literacy center because I am not the sole teacher using my classrooms (of which I had two—not one—this past year), these are held in shared and revolving space.

Therefore, I have to move from a physical to a more spiritual/emotional/intellectual environmental model built on a style of instruction and deportment hospitable to the students, in which each can feel a support and freedom that instigates and enhances learning.

## Style of Instruction

Creating such an environment these days begins before the class itself with an email welcoming students to class, then arrival by myself sufficiently before class to welcome each one personally and handle everyone’s initial concerns from doing paperwork to be signed, to allaying fear that someone is too old to study, to allaying concerns that the English of a sizable portion of the class is not good enough, etc. Each of these issues can be handled by me or my teaching scholars on the first day, bringing in any school resources we need to enlist, or handling the concern ourselves.

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1 This article is dedicated to Dr. Sylvia Feldman, formerly of Rutgers University, New Brunswick, New Jersey, who expertly demonstrated instruction oriented by acknowledging individual differences. The article is an adaptation of a presentation I recently gave to the students of Gordon-Conwell’s Africanus Guild Ph.D. support program.



Next, I view the classroom itself as a multi-level learning environment. In a single classroom, I try to be conscious to

Support at-risk  
students

Value normally-paced  
students

Encourage advanced  
students

and, at the same time, train future staff.

Since my classes are six weeks-intensive classes, comprised of students from many ethnic and national backgrounds, and these classes average between forty and sixty adult students of varying degrees of English facility, I need to recruit teaching assistants versed and adept in various languages or in second language learning skills, so I use that opportunity to train the next wave of seminary professors.

My class is multi-cultural, so I have the opportunity to look for the best and brightest potential teaching scholars who have demonstrated mastery of the subject matter from the varied constituencies of my students, with an eye out for those with expertise in the languages of the students (ethnicity does not automatically ensure language proficiency). I especially treasure those who have second language teaching skills. For my classes this past semester, I was blessed with Athanasian teaching scholars from Korean, Haitian, African American, and Hispanic backgrounds. In addition, our school's long-term librarian, a wonderful former Athanasian Teaching Scholar from years past with a background in secondary school education, works with a few students with learning disabilities who have been identified as such in her initial required class on theological research and writing. This way, every student is being addressed by one of the five of us.

Instead of engaging mere teaching assistants, we set some of our tithe aside (since our campus operates on a low budget, due to the half price cost of classes) so that I can hire Athanasian Teaching Scholars who are all graduates who have distinguished themselves in my classes, are passionate about theology, sense a calling to teach, are disciplined in their work, and have well developed personal skills. (Athanasius was a champion of Nicæan orthodoxy in the 300s.) These days, I try to build in moments when I discuss with my teaching scholars how to build a syllabus, how to interact with students, of course, how to grade, and other deportment and content matters. My wife and I have also set up opportunities for higher education for them (as the relationship she established between the administration of our campus and two external research doctoral programs; our supervising professors in the Africanus Guild serve as partners with the supervisors from these programs).

After Athanasian Scholars complete their first year tenure, we intercede for those who enroll as Ph.D. candidates as opportunities arise to teach at our school. I also rehire many of them as years go by (many others have gone on to teach for our school as well as for other seminaries, colleges, and universities) and we initially established the *Africanus Journal* to provide a vehicle both for our professors and for our advanced students to publish book reviews and outstanding articles, although the journal has now taken on its own astute readership and expanding field of excellent contributors, drawing at first on alumni, but now attracting professors, pastors, and para-church leaders from other schools and ministries in the United States and throughout the world who share with us a high view of Scripture. We have also helped establish three book lines with Wipf and Stock Publishers, one of which is a monograph series for first rate Ph.D. dissertations, and a study group in the Evangelical Theological Society, to which, among other scholars, our doctoral students may submit their very finest work for possible presentation.

On the first day of each class, I spell out the assignments in the syllabus, which I have already posted and which I have emailed several weeks before class begins to each enrolled student, so each has an e-copy, a hard copy, and verbal explanation in great detail, taking into account the fact that different students learn in different modes. I blend in choice in the assignments. For example, in Systematic Theology 1, students are assigned a general topic: "Study One Attribute of God and

Show How It Addresses One Problem Facing Your Church or Yourself [Something You Care About in Your Ministry]”). They have the freedom to select the attribute of God they prefer to study and the related topic from a long list of suggestions I provide (the final two pages of which are drawn from original student idea contributions over the years), or to create their own combination of divine attribute and issue, subject to approval. Attributes and topics, should, of course, relate (e.g., “God the Father and Fatherless Children,” or “God Who is on the Side of the Widow and Orphan and Human Trafficking,” or “The Lord of Hosts and the Problem of Whether or Not a Christian Should Serve in the Military (and, if so, in What Capacity?),” etc.). Topics have a wide range of application both personal and collective in scope. And the best results come when students select topics about which they care deeply. Then I outline for them what they need to do on each page of the paper (see Appendix #1).

To help them out, my wife and I have created sophisticated check lists for each of our courses that we call “cover sheets” with entries addressing each area of content and execution of the assignments for each of our classes, adapted from the high school equivalency [GED] checklist I used to use when I ran several GED centers in Louisville, Kentucky (see Appendix #2).

Students do a first draft and hand the paper into me or to the Athanasian Scholar of their choice (these days I have been hiring three Athanasian Scholars besides myself per forty-plus member classes). I have also created grading guides in the advanced required classes for the Athanasian Scholars and thus all of us grade by the same set of criteria. Athanasian Scholars themselves cannot give final grades, only I can do that as the Professor of Record, but Athanasian Scholars can give interim grades to help students mark their progress in mastering the assignments.

Students are encouraged to redo their papers all during the class, guided by the comments on the cover sheet and advice of the instructor with whom they are working, but they must hand in final revisions at the end. No revisions are accepted after the final class. (Otherwise, I remind them, that the Parousia may take place, we will all meet the Lord in the air, and, as we are going up, there they will be waving yet one more revision at me!)

I also build in a seventh class for individual meetings on the Monday between the fifth and sixth class sessions (regular class is on Tuesday evening). According to schedules, I and the Athanasian Scholars meet with as many students as wish to meet with us (I in the morning on the Hamilton campus and all evening at the Boston campus) and the Athanasian Scholars sometimes at Hamilton, but mainly during the day or in the evening (depending on each student’s and each Scholar’s availability) on the Boston campus, where the class is held, so that we can go over the students’ paper assignments with them individually and/or discuss any theological topic of concern to them arising out of the class sessions.

Anyone who appears to be falling through the cracks, we attempt to intercept on the special interview day, when I particularly invite those not yet handing anything in by the fifth class to sign up to meet with one of us. Each week, of course, the Athanasian Scholars invite students to email or call them and I invite students to call me by telephone during two sets of office hours each day (afternoon and early evening) on four days a week, or to leave a message at other times and I return their calls.

All general course assignments are drawn from the heart of what I want students to learn in the class, so that, when a student succeeds on the paper assignment, the student has mastered the core content of the course. In the Theology 1 assignment, I want them to learn that the nature of God can be used as a hermeneutic (that is, an interpretive tool) that answers all apologetic questions we face. Employing God’s nature as an interpretive tool, then, becomes the central theory on which all theology is done, becoming the foundational methodological tool for all three required theology classes. The reason this interpretive approach to the entire three prong enterprise (exegesis, systematizing, application) of doing theology works is because we have been created in the image

of God, so God's nature is central to who we are and, therefore, what we do. All of my classes and, indeed, my own theologizing, are built on understanding God's nature as our central interpretive principle.

All successive lectures and class exercises in doing theology in all the rest of the courses I teach are predicated on developing this approach, also it guides the way the topics of the study of God (theology) are organized, ordered for presentation, and presented.

### **Department in Classroom**

Here are some of the practical ideas I employ for succeeding in the classroom.

1. Do not be afraid of your students. They may be older than you are. They may look different. They may even look initially frightening—some of them big, hairy, beetle-browed, a lot like a villain you recently saw in a gangster flick.

But, always remember that they all signed up to take your course. Thus, they want your approval. You hold their grade. So let them know you want them to succeed. They will inevitably relax, if they know you are there to help them. These are, after all, all seminary students, so they must love God and sense God's calling, or they would not be in your class. If they are adults, chances are they are just as scared as you are—probably more so.

My mother, who was an award-winning saleswoman in the Macy's chain of department stores, used to tell me, "Everybody wants to feel important." I realize that is because everybody is important. God conceived of each of us before the foundations of the world and created us for this place at this time. So, I treat each student as called and precious. I determine beforehand that there are no Judases in my classes. Every one of them is my favorite, even those who are very different than I am and to whom, without an act of the will, I might not initially be drawn. However, before I even meet them, I determine to love them.

In our various prison ministries, my wife and I put into effect the strategy of treating each inmate as we wanted each to become, and, by and large, each one strove to become that person in our eyes. So, we brought that strategy over from prison ministry to the classroom. I realized, if we could love each of the inmates as brothers in Christ, we could easily love each of the seminarians as brothers and sisters in Jesus, too.

2. Provide a support network: I try to pray for students, beginning before the class commences. As I noted, I have supplied Athanasian Scholars to work particularly with the at-risk students and I have picked the Athanasian Scholars both for their theological prowess and their personal skills. I explain to students that potential teaching scholars must demonstrate an insatiable love for the topic (in this case theology), along with a divinely gifted love for the students, and a pedagogical proclivity: in short, a clear calling by God to teach. All of these points are true, so telling them to the students builds trust in the students for working with the Athanasian Teaching Scholars. Advertising pays.
3. Learn all their names. Names are important. Sometimes it takes the second or third class with a student to get the name fixed in my mind. Sometimes it takes many classes to pronounce a name correctly, but it is well worth the effort. Recognizing students individually honors them, affirms one's valuing of them, and encourages them to perform at their best, which instigates learning.

### **Intentional Instruction: Making It All Work**

Good teaching is not done by guesswork. I believe every part of one's preparation and classroom behavior must be intentional. All of us have been shortchanged by unprepared instructors who have entered the classroom talking randomly about their families, giving misleading multiple choice tests, belittling students, and mumbling, off the cuff, desultory thoughts

about their disciplines rather than delivering well-structured lectures and conducting insight-producing exercises that together drive the kind of classes that help students progress, since those are carefully constructed to move every student forward toward a workable understanding of each class's content and, thus, successful mastery of the course objectives.

Many of today's students are internet-information-oriented. No topic need be boring—all are relevant to a technological post-modern audience, trying to retrieve what it can use from the past with the tools of the future. Liberal arts students are now able to see the relevance of calculus, as they may not have done some fifty years ago, and future engineers realize the need for sharpening communication skills. In this mixing of the disciplines, there are no boring topics, only boring teachers. Don't be one.

On secular topics, failed courses are lamentable (and sometimes criminal, if safety issues are involved in applying what is learned). In seminary classes, they are sinful. Teachers, we are warned in James 3:1, are to "receive greater judgment," so we need to do our absolute best in meriting the trust given to us by our institutions. Therefore, all factors involved in a successful classroom experience for students must be simultaneously put into play.

A successful teacher, we are continually told, moves from being teacher-centered to being student-centered, that is to say, from purely content-centered to learning-centered teaching. This is a challenge given the content-intensive nature of a discipline like theology. In the more liberal schools I attended, theology was considered a hands-on activity—"asking questions" being the definition of "doing theology." So classes were discussion-driven. Usually, a student would present a paper or a professor would ask a question (e.g., "What is Your God Like?") and the rest was free-throw. In evangelical schools, given the concept that there is an actual *kerygma*, a *dogma*, a set of propositional truths that professors need to impart, classes have traditionally been lecture-driven. My classes are admittedly lecture-heavy. I am not teaching a more hands-on kind of skill—like arithmetic, or even English literature, where reader response has become a key methodology. But, I do try to build in theological exercises and discussions that increase as the students master the basics and move to my more advanced courses. Class discussion activities are far greater in the advanced "Contemporary Theology and Theologians" class and the Master of Theology level courses on Christology, than they are in Theology 1, but my task is not to be trendy. It is to make certain each student is moved a bit forward in knowledge from where she or he enters the course. The way to arrive at that goal varies as students acquire more information and more methodological skills. In a six week course that process has to be streamlined, but it is always a process that needs to be monitored for success. The interaction with instructors in interviews centered around written assignments helps to keep in a hands-on component.

Some students, of course, arrive already down the line of understanding the content of the discipline and move along toward expertise. Others enter at the beginning stage and gain ground. And some come from nowhere to expertise, given an agile mind and a hard work ethic. My goal each year is no dropouts. If we lose people for any other reasons than economic reversal, family catastrophes, ill health or dropping dead—in other words, if they give up because they "just don't get it"—I consider this a failure on our part.

In my experience, the most truly successful learning is done by relationship. Students want to succeed for teachers who obviously care about them and their progress and who have demonstrated that care by setting classes up in ways that encourage students' success. It is also the way our God seems to disciple us.

#### **Department in the Institution: Politics**

One additional thought: Internecine Politics—stay out of them as much as possible.

Here is my simple personal view: the teacher's job is to make the administration look as good

as possible, politically speaking. You want to help your bosses, the deans and department chairs, run what appears to be a tight ship so that the president and the board of directors commend the administration. You are not there to give your bosses grief. That's not part of the job description. Freedom to run your class is not freedom to run off with it; it is a matter of trust that one is doing the job one is contracted to do, which is move one's students forward in the core curriculum one is supposed to be teaching. Contentious people who alienate students from administrators or spend their time politicking or complaining about their bosses and being uncooperative are let go and for good reasons. They should have studied Romans 13 and applied its teaching to Christian institutions.

The administrator's job is to make the task of teaching as pleasant and supported as possible for the professors and to fight for their teachers and staff's increased benefits, wages, resources. A good administrator goes out of the way to make the teaching and administrative staff happy and secure and free to do the job as their expertise dictates it should be done, not overloading work or micromanaging classes, but concentrating on supplying needs and providing perks when merited. A slacking-off administrator, or one with a greed for power or on an ego trip, lording it over underlings, loses the best professors to other institutions, causes murmuring and votes of no confidence, and is eventually let go.

The body of Christ is intended to be symbiotic with Christ as boss and CEO and Chair of the Board. There is no power struggle about who is to be at the top. The answer in Christian institutions is Jesus. The rest of us are supposed to be fulfilling our job descriptions and, I believe, that begins with me doing my job most intentionally and faithfully to fulfill my calling and use my God-given abilities to the greatest extent that I can for the benefit of the students entrusted to me.

### **Brief History behind This Instructional Methodology**

How did I come to develop this intentional instructional methodology? When I was young, I was in love with books and reading and kept mostly to myself. I would read and write for pleasure (a joy that has not altered with the years). When I became a Christian in 1966 and took to heart Jesus's "Great Commission" in Matthew 28:18-20, I went out on the city streets of the town where I was born to tell others about Jesus and his love. Two years later, when the riots swept across the urban United States, my same birth-town, Plainfield, New Jersey, also had a riot. Standing out on my parents' porch, listening to the shots in town, as the National Guard shot out the streetlights, so the soldiers themselves would not be well-lit targets, I sensed my call to urban ministry. It came amidst the realization that as a child I had walked and ridden my bike through all these streets and never sensed the estrangement there.

So, from 1966-1972, I was engaged in some aspect of urban ministry, mostly street work (in Plainfield, then Newark, and Philadelphia), in between studying, so the combination served as an action/reflection model for me. I am a directed person and liked to see each experience yielding as much benefit to all concerned as possible. I realized also I was product-oriented and measured the success of the experience by what it produced.

In 1969, my wife and I had our first taste of inner city seminary education at the short-lived but wonderful Philadelphia expression of Gordon-Conwell, the year Gordon Divinity School merged with Conwell School of Theology (which was the former Temple University School of Theology) thus becoming the Gordon-Conwell of today. Conwell had been offering a classic education enhanced by courses attuned to the needs of the urban world and this legacy has passed on to our Boston Center of Urban Ministerial Education today. Given the urbanizing of the world's population, the legacy is addressing the nature and needs of the seminary of the future.

In 1970, I interned as a college chaplain and developed that position into a half-time call. Among the speakers I invited was a city evangelist with whom I had done street work in Newark,



New Jersey. When our chaplaincy ministry terminated in 1974, Bill Iverson invited my wife and me back to Newark to help him train seminarians in city ministry. He was working with New York Theological Seminary, then under Bill Webber (of *The Congregation in Mission* fame) and, as my wife and I each had Masters of Theology (Th.M.) degrees at that point, and, thus, were one degree advanced over those we supervised, we ended up teaching the basic Bible course for the seminary in New York and several courses in Newark to the seminarians with whom we lived in a training community relationship.

During this time, we spun off a parallel program for store front ministers who were attending our classes, but who were unable to enroll for lack of prior degrees past a high school diploma (and not all of them had completed that degree).

I found I could teach the storefront pastors Greek, but not theology, since many could not read on a level advanced enough to handle theological discourse. But they were bright and could negotiate introductory Greek grammar. This was a great frustration to me.

When we went to Louisville so that my wife could pursue her doctorate in New Testament studies, I decided to address this gap in my education by joining a fledgling literacy program. I could teach high school with my English Education degree from college, and I could teach graduate school, since I now had a Th.M. and experience as a seminary teacher, but I realized from our Newark experience I could not help students, despite their calling from God to learn, who were unable to negotiate the reading level required to do introductory theological training.

After two years of running night classes in Laubach Literacy method, I became teaching coordinator for the Jefferson County adult literacy program under the director, Sharon Darling, since I had mastered the art of taking non-reading adults through literacy training into high school equivalency training. The second part of that process involved checking off check sheets detailing areas in which students needed to improve.

Using the concept to create a template for a cover sheet for term papers, when we arrived at Gordon-Conwell, my wife and I created checklist summary pages for each major assignment in all the classes we each taught and these have become the bases to guide our students as they master their written assignments, as well as the training tool from which we produce the grading guides our teaching assistants use to correct assignments. The entire process is a way to help students negotiate the material. And teaching scholars learn to master the art of teaching content in a manner students can comprehend, thus helping these progress toward becoming future professors. Such standard tools also ensure that grading is not quixotic and that all of us are helping students move along the same learning trajectory.

My wife and I also developed our own evaluation tools, a final self-evaluation set of pages for students to fill out, detailing the extent of their reading of required assignments, the nature of their work in the class, any impediments they encountered, and what they were able to take out of the classroom and apply to their ministries. A second set of course evaluation pages helps us evaluate the course and adjust assignment sheets, lectures, and class exercises to the altering nature of instruction required as times change and the class cultural composition expands.

Thus, through the years, I have come to value a very intentional approach to teaching which strives to create a winsome environment that helps students maximize their ability to learn.

William David Spencer won the Nancy Higginson Dore Prize for excellence in education from Rutgers University, where he earned his bachelors in English Education. As well as an ordained minister, he is a certified English teacher and the former teaching coordinator for the adult literacy education program of Jefferson County, Kentucky, where he established and supervised eight literacy and GED centers in the city of Louisville and surrounding towns. He also authored a pamphlet on how to begin a literacy center and co-authored a reading materials assessment booklet published by the Jefferson County Board of Education Adult Program. After a blessed year studying at the former Philadelphia center of Gordon-Conwell, he

earned a M.Div., with a New Testament concentration, in the Greek and Hebrew track, and a Th.M. in Christian Higher Education at Princeton Theological Seminary and his Th.D. in Theology and Ancient Literature at Boston University School of Theology. He is the author of several hundred articles, stories, poems, chapters in books, reviews, editorials, and with his wife Aida writes the Christian Post blog *From the Timeless to the Timely: Applying Scriptural Truths Today*, which has been chosen as “Editor’s Pick” and “Hot Blog” numerous times. He is also co-author or editor of thirteen books, including two new titles in city ministry, *Reaching for the New Jerusalem: A Theological and Biblical Framework for the City* with Gordon-Conwell/Boston professors, and his latest book, *Name in the Papers* (a novel), which was awarded The Golden Halo Award for Outstanding Contribution to Literature by the Southern California Motion Picture Council.

## Appendix I

### TERM PAPER ASSIGNMENT SYSTEMATIC THEOLOGY I

**Required Assignment:** Pick one attribute (characteristic) of God and show us how it helps us interpret an important issue in the church today.

**Student Choices:** Select only one attribute of God you want to explore. (To find an attribute, read “God’s Self Revelation in Adjectives” in the packet; Chapter One, “The God of the Bible” in *The Global God*; and Part 3, “What is God Like?” in Erickson’s *Christian Theology*.) Select only one issue in the church to address. (To find an issue, see suggestions on “The Sample Paper Topics” list at the end of this syllabus.) Please note: if you want to choose a topic not on the list, you must ask the professor for approval.)

Step One: PAGE ONE

Center Your Title on the First Page

By: (Put in Your Name)

Prof:

Class:

Campus:

Date:

Step Two: PAGES TWO AND THREE

- Write an introduction with a topical thesis and scope briefly describing the attribute (that is to say, the characteristic) of God you will be helping your church to understand and the issue in the church to which you will applying your understanding of that attribute as your interpretive tool (this is your topical thesis statement). Briefly show us the steps you will take to develop the connection between the attribute of God and the issue in the church (this is your scope). Make sure you have a strong **topical thesis statement and scope** (see examples on the first page of your packet).
- Do a word study of that attribute throughout the Bible.

- Use a concordance or a tool like *BibleWorks* to find references to your chosen attribute of God in the Old Testament. Look up each verse and read all the surrounding verses to see by its context what that word means. Make sure all verses are applying to God (not to people or any other reference).
- Please note: if there are many verses, select about one half dozen key representative ones.
- Write one or two paragraphs summarizing each of your findings. These summary statements will be the OT biblical principles you will use as your interpretive tools.
- Supplement (or refine) your biblical summary statements with information you gleaned from your readings or class lectures.
- Next, use a concordance or a tool like *BibleWorks* to find the references to the attribute you are studying in the New Testament. Again, look up each verse and read all the surrounding verses to see by the context what that word means.
- Try to discuss at least one half dozen instances of the word to discover its various shades of meaning.
- Write one or two paragraphs summarizing your findings into declarative summary statements about this attribute of God. These will become the NT biblical principles you will use to interpret your issue.
- Finally, you may consult the meanings in the lexicons and also consider what the various assigned readings and the class lectures have to say about the attribute of God you have selected.
- Now compare your list of OT and NT biblical principles to see which can be fused together and which add new dimensions to your understanding and should be listed separately. Can you draw any additional conclusions to refine your interpretive biblical principles? Does the comparison add anything to your understanding of this characteristic of God?
- To end this section, make sure you have summarized all your discoveries from readings, lectures, discussions with your biblical findings to refine your interpretive principles (which you will very shortly be applying to the church issue you selected).

### Step 3: PAGES FOUR AND FIVE

- Now introduce the current issue facing the Church which you selected. Show us why this issue is important. Consult various sources of information about this issue. Look at books, journals, surveys, Internet essays, newspaper articles, news magazines, music lyrics, movies, interviews (or conduct interviews yourself), etc. Remember, all sources of information must be footnoted. Check with the librarian if you have questions about how a footnote should be written. Use *The Chicago Manual of Style*, Kate Turabian's *A Manual for Writers of Research Papers*, Nancy Vyhmeister's *Quality Research Papers*, or a similar style book. We are checking for consistency, whether you follow carefully whichever system you choose.

### Step 4: PAGES SIX AND SEVEN

- Apply your interpretive principles (the conclusion statements you made in part one that summarize what you learned about your chosen attribute of God) to the issue in the church you selected.

- In your analysis, make sure you are using the Scriptures and interpretive principles you drew up about the attribute of God you studied in part one and not drawing from new Scriptures and using new attributes to interpret the issue. Remember, if you have not studied a particular Scripture or attribute of God in part one, do not introduce it and use it for your interpretive tool here in part two. Stick with the attribute and scriptural principle you studied in part one. Make sure the two halves of your paper interrelate.
- After you have analyzed the issue, using your biblical principles as your interpreting tool, ask how you would help your church develop a position on this issue that is biblically sound (in other words, guided by the attribute of God with which you interpreted it).
- Draw out from your analysis practical ways in which Christians should act when confronting this issue. Summarize these into step by step recommendations for your parishioners to apply. Make sure these practical ways flow directly out of your analysis.

#### Step 5: PAGE EIGHT

- Now you are ready to draw your conclusion.
- Restate your thesis statement as a conclusion, tying together all your research. Provide a thought provoking statement for people to ponder.
- BIBLIOGRAPHY and FOOTNOTES or ENDNOTES should be properly formatted. (Remember to follow your selected style manual [e.g. *Chicago Manual of Style*, Turabian, Vyhmeister, Campbell/Ballou, Trimmer/McCrimmon, etc., whichever you chose] for proper format for your bibliography and your notes. Please note, footnote and bibliographic entries are often not done in the same way, but will differ from each other. There is also a sample page on the Reserve shelves under “Research and Writing” you may consult.) Ask the librarian for help if needed. Also, remember to double space the text, using at least size 12 font and 1 inch margins. Don’t forget to use the cover sheet to double check your paper and make sure you have included all parts and aspects of the assignment. Attach the cover sheet to your draft and hand it in with your draft. Remember always to submit your previous draft and previous cover sheet with instructor’s comments with each redoing. And never hesitate to consult the professor or Athanasian Teaching Scholars at the appropriate times or with the appropriate means suggested (telephone, email, interviews) with your questions to help you complete the assignments. That is why we are here.

## Appendix II

Attach this cover sheet to your submission.

**Paper: Theology I**

**Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

**From: William David Spencer**      **GRADE**

**Name :** \_\_\_\_\_

**Telephone:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Email:** \_\_\_\_\_

**The following items are rated according to the following symbols:**

Y=yes                      S: sometimes/somewhat                      N=no  
I=inadequate              A=adequate                      G=good                      S=superior

### Methodology

<b>Conclusions proved</b> .....	I A G S
Exhaustive / comprehensive .....	I A G S
Accurate .....	I A G S
Insightful.....	I A G S
Original .....	I A G S
Sources are primary and creative.....	I A G S

### Completeness of Study

Basis <b>of study</b> is nature of God.....	N S Y
One attribute of God's character.....	N S Y
Word study of one attribute throughout Bible .....	N S Y
Is word study divided into OT and NT sections?.....	N S Y
Did you study at least 6 passages from the OT?.....	N S Y
Did you study at least 6 passages from the NT?.....	N S Y
Are your own word study definitions presented before lexicon definitions?.....	N S Y
Do you derive principles for interpretation from your study?.....	N S Y
Did you use class textbooks?.....	N S Y
Application to an Issue .....	N S Y
Did you tell us <b>why</b> this issue is crucial?.....	N S Y
Is your issue well documented? .....	N S Y
Did you interpret your issue using the principles derived from your Bible study?.....	N S Y
Did you list practical suggestions for applying your findings to the church?...	N S Y
Did you draw out recommended actions directly from your analysis?.....	N S Y
Did you include a bibliography and references?.....	N S Y

### Written Presentation

Well-organized paper (both halves of your paper connect) .....	N S Y
Introductory paragraph .....	N S Y
Topic stated .....	N S Y
Thesis stated .....	N S Y
Scope stated .....	N S Y
Body .....	N S Y
Summary .....	N S Y
Conclusion .....	N S Y
Literary Style - clear and succinct .....	N S Y
Spelling and grammar correct .....	N S Y
Print easy to read .....	N S Y
Bibliography cited .....	N S Y
Facts and ideas of others noted in footnotes .....	N S Y
Footnotes & bibliography have a consistent and correct citation .....	N S Y

### Comments:



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## Review of *Preaching the New Testament* edited by Ian Paul and David Wenham (Downers Grove: InterVarsity, 2013)

PATRICIA BATTEN

Those who are interested in preaching the New Testament will find Ian Paul and David Wenham's work an invaluable tool in their homiletical tool chest. Paul and Wenham have produced a volume that includes the wisdom of eighteen New Testament scholars who place utmost importance on the task of preaching. The chapters in this book serve to "bridge the gap" that has been opened up between people and the Bible text (14). The writers accomplish this task by "sharing some insights about how to interpret and communicate the New Testament today" (15). Their insights are thoughtful and practical. Even more important, these scholars are practitioners and their ideas have been tested in the pulpit.

*Preaching the New Testament* covers the main literary genres of the New Testament, but it also zooms in and focuses on specific areas of interest to the homiletician. The inclusion of chapters on how to preach the infancy narratives, on the New Homiletic, on how to handle archaeology and history, miracles, ethics, and future hope and judgment in the pulpit help to give this book depth and breadth.

The first chapter, "Preaching the Gospels," begins with the clarion call to preach Jesus Christ. D.A. Carson reminds the reader that the most fundamental task when preaching the gospels is to preach Jesus Christ faithfully (32). The chapter written by the late R.T. France deals with the infancy narratives. He wisely advocates a balanced approach when dealing with the listener's misconceptions revolving around the Christmas story. It should also be noted that *Preaching the New Testament* is dedicated to the memory of Dick France, who was a steadfast follower of Jesus Christ.

The challenge of preaching the miracles of the New Testament is an enormous one. Stephen Wright highlights the current theological debate regarding New Testament miracles, and he offers homiletical strategies to communicate them effectively. His chapter ends with a brief example from a sermon by Eugene Lowry in which the "mystery is proclaimed" indirectly. The astute student of homiletics will read this sermon snippet in light of the excellent chapter written by Helge Stadelmann. Stadelmann defines the New Homiletic with refreshing clarity and accurately describes its implications for preaching. He places the preaching of Eugene Lowry in its proper theological context.

In the chapter, "How Archaeology and History Can Help with New Testament Preaching," Peter Oakes argues that preachers would benefit from using archaeological and historical data to gain a fuller picture of first century life (173). The resources he suggests throughout the chapter would be a helpful addition to any preacher's library.

*Preaching the New Testament* is a must-have resource for students who are just beginning their homiletical journey and for pastors who need a fresh look at the New Testament. You will not walk away from this book wondering how or if you will use the information in it. These scholarly and practical insights can be applied in the pulpit next Sunday.

Patricia Batten is a Ranked Adjunct Assistant Professor of Preaching at Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary. She is on the preaching staff at Hope Community Church in Newburyport, MA and speaks regularly at women's conferences and retreats.

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– Peter Zhang  
Pastor, Scarborough Mandarin Alliance  
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**Review of *Reaching for the New Jerusalem: A Biblical and Theological Framework for the City*, Urban Voice Series, edited by Seong Hyung Park, Aída Besançon Spencer, and William David Spencer (Eugene, OR: Wipf and Stock, 2013)**

JEANNE DEFazio

In his introductory chapter, “Rebuilding the City of Enoch with the Blueprints of Christ,” William David Spencer identifies the culturally diverse Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary, Boston Campus’ Center for Urban Ministerial Education (CUME) as authors who contributed to this book, joint promoters of “cross cultural understanding” (7). Twelve ministers who teach at CUME, each from his or her own discipline, offer the New Jerusalem as an icon of hope for the modern city. Spencer quotes Revelation 21:9 to demonstrate that God’s dwelling place is no longer inside the Temple, but within his people. He argues that that there is no way to follow the postmodern dream of Woodstock’s lyrical wisdom and get back to the pre-fallen garden.<sup>1</sup> He insists that “Jesus Christ’s mandate [is] to go into all the world and share his good news, building the Christian community along the lines of the New Jerusalem, a city of light in which God is revealed” (16). Spencer offers the thesis of this work: “Toward accomplishing this task (as the authors are followers of Jesus’ Great Commission), this book is an examination of the biblical and theological meaning of the city and our mission in it” (16).

In his preface, Seong Hyun Park references John’s apocalyptic book of Revelation (21:2) depicting the New Jerusalem “coming down out of heaven from God.” He describes each contributing chapter’s vision of the New Jerusalem as a ray of hope in the shadow of urban despair. Aida Besançon Spencer’s “What City Are We Creating?” develops the imagery of the New Jerusalem as a royal city where God dwells, drawing from 1 Kings 6:20’s vision of “a holy of holies” shaped in a perfect cubic to illustrate the awe-inspiring city of God. In “*Ecclesiapolis*: Two Millenia of Mutual Transformation between Church and City,” David A. Currie chronicles the history of *anno domini* (“after Christ”) cities, explaining the Jewish traditions of the Old Jerusalem to contrast to the New Jerusalem founded on missionary zeal to fulfill the Great Commission. John Runyon’s “Blueprints for the Heart of the Rebuilder” offers Nehemiah’s call to rebuild Jerusalem as an imprimatur for the modern church builder, while Dean Borgman’s “Roadblocks to the New Jerusalem Facing Urban Youth and Communities” takes a hard look at the tragedy of recent violent deaths of urban youth. Teri Elliott-Hart’s “Challenges to Discipleship in the Context of Contemporary Consumer Culture” suggests Christians center spiritually on advising fasts from consumerism, as Bianca Duemling’s “Intercultural Unity, A Sign of the New Jerusalem: Overcoming Barriers and Getting Ready for Church Collaborations across Cultural Lines” reminds us that the modern city is torn apart racially and culturally and not ready for Jesus’ return. Looking for options, David Martinez’s chapter, “Building *Shalom* in the City: Education Provides a Bridge between the Church and the Secular Community,” provides an antidote within the church for discouragement facing inner city minorities who are paralyzed by poverty, lack of education, and lack of identity. Minorities are challenged to envision and work to bring about the New Jerusalem. Carlot D. Celestin’s, “A Conceptual Framework for Counseling City People” outlines the rudiments of inner city counseling, and Lorraine Cleaves Anderson’s, “Under One Steeple: Biblical and Theological Foundations for Sharing Church Space” recommends overcoming the economic challenges within the urban churches by a newfound ecumenicalism in churches clustering by

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<sup>1</sup> “We are stardust/We are golden/And we’ve got to get ourselves/Back to the garden,” Joni Mitchell, Woodstock lyrics, [songmeanings.com/songs/view/140900](http://songmeanings.com/songs/view/140900).

renting their space to other denominations. Next, Mark G. Harden's "Redeeming the City in the Margins" and Douglas Hall, Judy Hall, Steve Daman and Jeffrey Bass's "Living-System Ministry Ushers in the New Jerusalem" provide conceptual urban roadmaps which help today's cities transform into the New Jerusalem. Finally, J. Anthony Lloyd's epilogue offers insight into the point of view of the authors: "Ours as a ministry is to provide leadership at the city wall that embraces all who for too long have traveled in the crowd circling the periphery of the city wall" (195). The book includes the marginalized and extends a final invitation to the reader: "Those who will be the beneficiaries of the New Jerusalem become its residents. They inhabit a city whose maker and builder is God, and God invites all of us to participate in what he is doing" (195).

The authors used a variety of sources, among which were the Bible, Hebrew lexicons, researched media, government statistics, theological texts, and personal accounts of shared ministry experience. The book meets the *Africanus Journal* precepts because it is multicultural, multiracial, urban-oriented, and it focuses on the Bible in a cooperative way.

I loved this book because it resonated with my personal experience building Christian community. Having recently edited and published with John Lathrop, *Creative Ways to Build Christian Community*, I understood firsthand about the challenges of reaching for the ideal of the "New Jerusalem" within the urban reality. I recommend *Reaching for the New Jerusalem: A Biblical and Theological Framework for the City* to Christian workers and residents in all cities, professors, students, pastors, lay leaders for church book studies, and anyone interested in a vision for redemption in the urbanizing of the globe. This book is a real encouragement for anyone involved in ministry. It is a perfect textbook for courses in Urban Ministry. I found nothing to dislike or to disagree with in this book and its only weakness is that at 215 pages, it is too short!

Jeanne DeFazio is a former actress, who left playing supporting parts in movies and television series to disappear into a life of service to the marginalized in the drama of real life. Jeanne became a teacher of second language learner children in the barrios of San Diego. Responding to God's calling, she pursued seminary education at Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary, and, after graduation, has returned as an Athanasian Teaching Scholar serving now a number of years assisting second language learning students at Gordon-Conwell's multicultural Boston Center for Urban Ministerial Education.



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## Creative Ways to Build Christian Community

EDITED BY

JEANNE C. DEFazio

JOHN P. LATHROP

PREFACE BY WILLIAM DAVID SPENCER

*"Creative Ways to Build Christian Community is exactly what its title says it is: a very personal, practical response to the present and future prospect of isolation, a treasure trove of examples and suggestions about how to accomplish the Great Commission from community builders telling how, over the years and the ministries, they have implemented creative ways to build up churches and organizations to develop more intensive Christian fellowship and, thereby, create community."*

From the Preface by DR. WILLIAM DAVID SPENCER

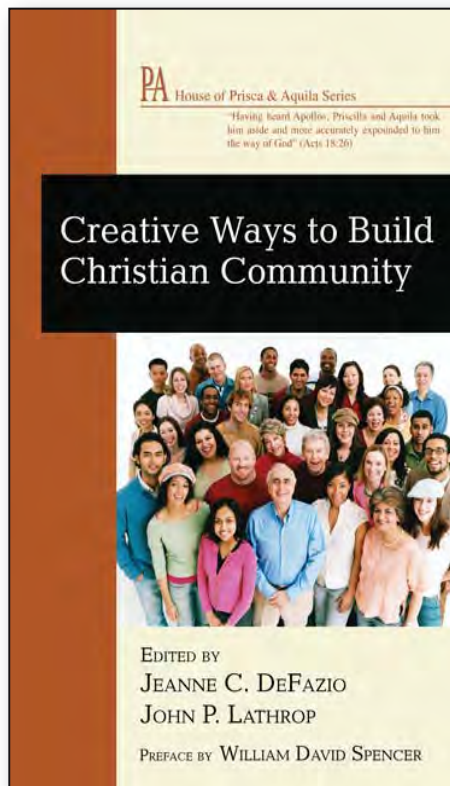
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## Review of *How to Succeed in Hollywood (Without Losing Your Soul): A Fieldguide for Christian Screenwriters, Actors, Producers, Directors, and More* by Ted Baehr (Washington, D.C.: WorldNetDaily, 2011)

WILLIAM DAVID SPENCER

Keying off his experiences working in the film industry, guitar virtuoso and veteran sound track composer Ry Cooder, in his song “Down in Hollywood,” once warned unsuspecting travelers to gas up and drive swiftly through the tinselled city, because on every corner its lurking predators are waiting to seize passersby, yank them out of their safety zones, and kick them around their mean streets.

The warning also applies to all of us worldwide, since everyone with technology is exposed to the gargantuan reach of the entertainment industry and its power to shape public opinion through the means of the net. In my travels, I have noticed the whole world is “star struck,” from the Michael Jackson ephemera store I discovered on the street of Athens to the thriving markets of Disney bootlegs I came across in Havana during one of the windows of U.S. travel there. But no matter which end of the camera readers are interested in, their attraction and its ramifications are thoroughly explored in this thorough and thought-provoking study by deeply respected Hollywood insider Ted Baehr, creator and driving force behind the *Movieguide*, the filmdom “bible” that guides public opinion.

His book, subtitled “A Fieldguide for Christian Screenwriters, Actors, Producers, Directors, and More...” contains an enormous amount of information in its fourteen chapters. It is much like an army survival manual. A huge 564 page compendium of inside information, it draws from interviews with an astonishing number of key figures, such as the chairman of Walt Disney Pictures and the Walt Disney Studio, the president of Hallmark Hall of Fame, the president of PorchLight Entertainment, the producer of the Simpsons, the producers of *Independence Day*, *Free Willy*, *Raiders of the Lost Ark*, *The Lion King* and *Beauty and the Beast*, the director of *The Passion of the Christ*, the scriptwriter of *Finding Nemo* and *Toy Story*, the writer of *Braveheart*, the creator and executive producer of *7<sup>th</sup> Heaven*, as well as the actor who played its protagonist, the director of photography and cinematographer for *Crash*, iconic actors like Pat Boone and Jane Russell, right into contemporary talents like John Ratzenberger, veteran voice actor in every Pixar movie, as well as other producers, directors, screenwriters, songwriters, marketing and distributing executives, photographers, and on. In short, this book draws from a lifetime of insights and contacts by an author who is a long term Emmy-winning producer of literally hundreds of documentaries for PBS as well as the seminal CBS-TV production *The Chronicles of Narnia: The Lion, the Witch, and the Wardrobe*, which anticipated recent productions by decades.

Considering the five paradigms with which Christians have historically regarded culture observed by H. Richard Niebuhr in *Christ and Culture*, Ted Baehr, who holds degrees from Dartmouth College, New York University School of Law, and the Institute of Theology at the Cathedral of St. John the Divine, considers the nature of each paradigm, but his ultimate goal is to follow “Christ the Transformer of Culture” (10), for, as he assures readers on the back cover of *How to Succeed in Hollywood*, “The Hollywood culture can be changed.”

To unpack this statement, he divides his book into two sections of six and seven chapters, respectively, preceded by a prayer, preface, and introduction, and followed by a conclusion, an epilogue (which is 1 John 5:10-12), a glossary, notes, and an index. The preface affirms the value of story, as a necessary form of cultural communication that reveals “the moral, philosophical,

social, psychological, spiritual, and aesthetic messages the story conveys” (xv), and, therefore, what its worldview values. The introduction lays out clearly how the visual spinning out of stories will be examined through a variety of informed sources. It also orients the exploration to follow by questioning readers who are interested in entering the film industry, on their motivation to do so, the value they assign to money, the level of their loyalty to God’s way of living and working, their sense of responsibility toward the influence they will develop, their plan on how to resist the temptations they will face, and whether they will use the Bible as a guide to leaven the society they will enter or whether they will let that society leaven them. The introduction is excellent and, like the text that follows, filled with sage advice and a multitude of statistics, illustrations from films, and insights from insiders that support each point being made.

The first section is entitled “Foundations.” Chapter 1 deals with the relationship between the church and the film industry, focusing its exploration of the mutual attempt to woo cooperation from each other in an examination of Niebuhr’s paradigms for how the followers of Christ and those who inhabit the film culture should interrelate. This discussion segues into a succinct history of the connection between the performing arts and the church from the mystery or miracle plays of the Middle Ages (11) to film. Realizing that such a discussion ends inevitably in the need for a worldview on which one’s actions are predicated, the author, who co-chaired an Art and Communications Committee for the Coalition on Revival to forge “The Christian World View of Art and Communication” sets out the committee’s findings of what are necessary components for a Christian worldview of the Arts (12-15) and then contrasts those with “Hollywood’s Pagan ‘Theology’ of Art” (15-16). Having set out these two bookends, he discusses thirty seven prominent religious movies from the silent seminal film *The Passion Play* (1897) to *The Nativity Story* (2006) and concludes by asking: “What Constitutes a ‘Christian’ Movie?” (17, 25) What he sees at stake here is nothing less than the power of influence. Paraphrasing philosopher John Locke, he notes, “whoever controls the media controls the culture” (28), and for the next twenty three pages carefully examines that issue in regard to Hollywood, suggesting the kind of interpreting questions we need to bring to its productions and the values they are promoting. The skilled blending of data, quotation, scholarship, and examples from films and the lives of those who make them sets a model for the methodology he will continue to employ to explore the nuanced dimensions of Hollywood’s impact on the thinking of a myriad of cultures. In addition to the schools at which he earned degrees, Ted Baehr also studied at Cambridge University, the University of Bordeaux and Toulouse, and the University of Munich, and currently lectures all over the world, so his vision is globally-oriented.

In the truest sense of the phrase, chapter 2 gets down to business. It begins by reminding readers that the movie industry is just that: an industry. It is not primarily aimed at communication or art, but at entertainment and making money, but the church is all about communication, as its goal is to spread the gospel of Jesus Christ. This difference in priorities creates a tension that often resolves itself in peculiar ways. For example, we learn that neither the actor who played Eric Liddell nor the screenwriter of *Chariots of Fire* were Christians. The screenwriter, an agnostic, summarized the plot as a “couple of young fellows who put their fingers up to the world.” Much of the backing money came from a Moslem who died in the car crash that killed Princess Diana, the producer was Jewish, and the only committed Christian was the actor who played the Jewish runner (54), yet this is one of the best loved and most honored of “Christian” movies. With that striking introduction, the author explores the building blocks of film, such as backstory, the sales pitch, the plot twist. The subtitle has promised this book is a “fieldguide” and chapter two examines both the crafting skills and the working values a Christian needs to parallel to produce films of the quality that can, indeed, bring about positive change of culture while they entertain, inform, make money, and edify.

Chapter 3 deals with discerning God’s plan for one’s life and whether it does or does not involve a career in film, and, if it does, how one can succeed in serving God. This chapter draws

on first person experience from the insights of actress Donzaleigh Abernathy (daughter of Ralph Abernathy), who, bathing her career in daily prayer, consciously forged a reputation for taking only “socially minded projects.” As she observes: “They knew I wouldn’t do any schlock. I only work on honorable movies with redeeming values” (93-94). She also notes that she chose a series of mentors from Sidney Poitier to Ruth Gordon to Gregory Peck, who advised her on every aspect of acting, so she could hone her skills. In addition, the chapter features the insights of seminarian turned writer, director, and producer Randall Wallace (*Braveheart*, *The Man in the Iron Mask*), who emphasizes the connection of clarity of faith and clarity of career vision. Chapter 3 ends with thirty three pages of hands-on exercises designed to discern one’s motivation and clarify one’s talent and, then, introduces readers to descriptions of jobs to explore that are commensurate with what one discovers about one’s gifts from doing the exercises.

Chapter 4 details the power of story to affect people positively or negatively. This chapter includes instructions on how to write effectively, reminding readers that “the average movie takes nine years from start to finish. *The Passion of Christ* took ten years. *Evita* took twenty-three years. *Batman* took seventeen years” (150). Helpful fill-out exercise pages, interviews with writers, and a step by step explanation of what comprises a successful script provide a large practical component to the chapter. The attention to story continues in Chapter 5, emphasizing the fact that moral Christian values drive the most successful movies. Chapter 5 includes charts that illustrate this fact, while also noting that certain genres succeed more than others, thus strong biblical values, wedded to science fiction or fantasy adventure, comedy, supernatural horror, and animated features take one “well on your way to making a blockbuster hit” (212).

Finally, section one ends with a careful discussion of the audience appropriateness of content, particularly the effect of violence on viewing children, but as well violence and pornography’s immediate effect on the thinking of adults as well as the aftereffects in their actions.

Section two invests its seven chapters in a “Step by Step” exposition of every facet of the industry. Chapter 7 introduces the aspects of producing a movie from pre right to post production. Chapter 8 tackles financing and the related area of how rights are handled as well as distribution, with extremely sage advice that reminds us that losing one’s money is as simple in Hollywood as going broke in a glitzy casino (265-275), since the film industry is like a fraternity that routinely hazes outsiders. Chapter 9 features hands on exercises to fill out on breaking down every aspect of making a film and includes illustrations of storyboards, daily schedule charts of filming days, descriptions of behind camera jobs. This chapter alone is worth the price of the book. Chapter 10 goes into every aspect of production, including how to conduct rehearsals, how to chart camera shots and other camera advice, lighting, graphics, audio, locations, and on. Chapter 11 explores post production issues including music and sound, editing, distribution and sales, but contextualizes all of these tasks, as do the previous chapters, within the worldview of a vibrant, living Christianity that bends all activity toward the goal of serving Christ. Chapter 12 examines the roles of director and actor, and illustrates its points with interviews with John Ratzenberger of Pixar and Morgan Brittany, who reminds readers that “I have two children who can see everything I’ve ever done, and they have nothing to be ashamed of or hide from their friends. They don’t have to say, ‘My mom did *Playboy*, or this sleazy movie.’ In my twenties these things were all thrown at me. I had no kids, no husband, but I looked into the future and said, ‘If I make this choice, the consequences will never go away” (428-429). As with the myth in academia, that one needs to compromise one’s beliefs in certain fields to gain a Ph.D., the myth that one needs to sully oneself to advance a career in film is exploded by the success of each of the Christians interviewed who have achieved success without selling themselves out. We are counseled that one needs to “die to ‘rich and famous” (432), if one is to live for Christ and follow the Lord’s calling in film or, really, in any profession. On a personal note, I recognized Morgan Brittany’s name, not from her role on “Dallas” (which I have never seen), but for her role in *The Prodigal*, which I thought was one of Billy Graham’s most memorable

movies. The chapter ends with Morgan Brittany's example of how to "help the Christian projects" (433), and the insights of actors Stephen Collins ("7th Heaven") and Jane Russell (whose brooding portrayal in *The Outlaw* has become iconic). Finally, chapter 13, "Movers and Shakers," takes a look at the dynamics that drive the industry by drawing on the insights of a variety of major players whose insights serve as a kind of summary of all the practical advice that has transpired.

The conclusion summarizes the spiritual perspective that has motivated this book, gives tools for further study, and ends with encouragement grounded in facts that faith expressed through talent and skill does succeed in Hollywood. A helpful glossary of terms, endnotes, and an index complete this unique production.

Renowned today as the definitive tracker of movies who assigns the ratings accepted by some 50 million subscribers worldwide in all his *Movieguide*'s many forms, Ted Baehr is a major figure who has invested much effort to produce a master work that is essential reading for anyone touched by the power of television, the megaplex, Netflix, etc., which is many of us around the world, as well as our students, our parishioners, our neighbors. Every school, every church, in fact, every home with a television set, or a DVD player, or a computer should have this book available in its library. In our increasingly visual world where opinions are being formed by images, it is indispensable reading.

William David Spencer is Ranked Adjunct Professor of Theology and the Arts, teaching in Gordon-Conwell's Boston campus, Center for Urban Ministerial Education. He is the author of over 200 articles, stories, poems, editorials, and author or editor of 13 books, the latest of which are *Marriage at the Crossroads: Couples in Conversation about Discipleship*, *Gender Roles, Decision Making and Intimacy*, *Dread Jesus (reprinted by Wipf and Stock)*, *Reaching for the New Jerusalem: A Biblical and Theological Framework for the City*, Urban Voice Series, and an urban adventure mystery novel, *Name in the Papers*.



## Review of *Name in the Papers: 11 Snapshots and a Video* by William David Spencer (Levittown, PA: Helping Hands Press, 2013)

ANNETTE V. JANES

Skillful author William David Spencer swiftly paints a colorful scene of those who have few choices in life and take the wrong road as the easiest. Immediately, your senses are alerted to danger. Though only 153 pages, once you are on board, this novel pulls you in on a fast moving train that brings you up short at the station with a heart-pounding gasp. On the way, there are drugs, deceit, kidnapping and redemption, and a life-affirming climax.

*Name in the Papers* is set up in an unusual way, almost like a play or TV drama, which it could be. The story opens on the scene of two young mothers waiting in a New Jersey correctional facility's visiting area to see a friend. Both Jackie and Meshelle have a nine-month old baby and they quickly discover that the man they are visiting, Tommy Darrell Veith, is the father of both their children. Tommy, an alcoholic brawler of about 158 lbs, was arrested for drugs, assault on an officer, etc.

Tommy proudly points out to his companion, Larry Lightfoot (called the Scout), the two women and the two babies. Larry is also waiting for someone, Pastor Jim. In spite of this major revelation of betrayal, the women become friends. There is a scene that shows the difficulty of the poor to visit as they have next to no transportation and no money.

Pastor Jim visits Larry Lightfoot in prison as part of his ministry. The pastor has graduated from Richfield State College and taken masters courses at New Jersey Theological Seminary. Though uninspired, he has somehow worked his way into being in charge of a small church of 25 elderly parishioners in downtown Richfield N.J. Biding his time, he is looking for ideas to write a book and will try to get a teaching position later if things work out.

Lightfoot, a hefty 300 lb. giant, tells Pastor Jim that he prays, attends AA, Bible Study, church services, reads his Bible, goes to computer class, and every other redeeming thing he can think of. He knows from experience that positive behavior will help cut his sentence and look good on his record.

Pastor Jim has been on the job for a short time and is a bit too trusting and credulous. Lightfoot is a liar, a user of everyone he can con, street-smart, and jail-wise. Later, we learn that he has eight children by four women, and that he has a son in the very same jail (in another area). Somehow Larry Lightfoot has enough cunning and charm that the pastor wants to help him.

The story proceeds with a startling description of the inner workings of jail life, gang influence, and vivid personality portraits of the inmates. The authenticity of the prison scenes reveals that the writer knows of what he speaks as he has worked in that kind of ministry. People seem to have an avid curiosity for the inner workings of the judicial system, whether it be lawyers, penitentiaries, inmates, their personalities, etc. Many television programs are dedicated to these subjects, one of the most recent award-winning shows "Orange is the New Black," for instance. Though there are still some who want to "lock them up and throw away the key," much of the public would like to see more help for prisoners and assistance to them to reduce recidivism.

A few months later, Pastor Jim receives a call from Larry Lightfoot to come pick him up as he is being released (with the help of a character reference from the pastor). Prison ministry is challenging to the best and most aware of ministers and this one is a pushover. When all 300 lbs. of Larry and some friends start to attend Pastor Jim's services the story becomes sometimes poignant and sometimes hilarious. After a few tough situations, several occasions for growth, and

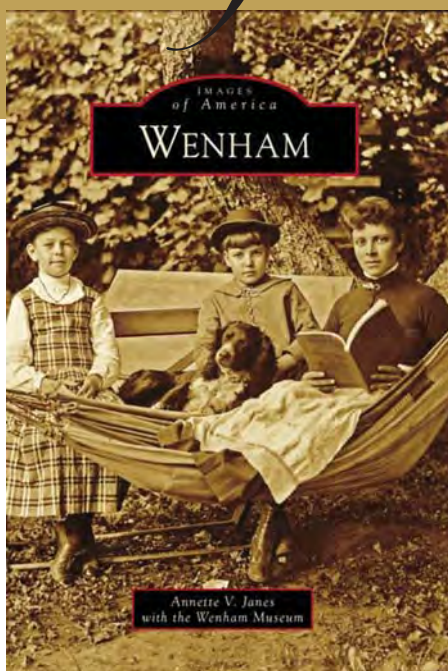
a dawning realization of his position, Pastor Jim begins to see Christ in others and comes to know unconditional love.

Lively prose and superb writing add to this great story whose author was honored last year with the Golden Halo Award by the Southern California Motion Picture Council for outstanding contribution to Literature.

Annette V. Janes is a mother, librarian, and author, President of Hamilton Historical Society, and Chairman of Trustees at Hamilton-Wenham library, S. Hamilton, MA.

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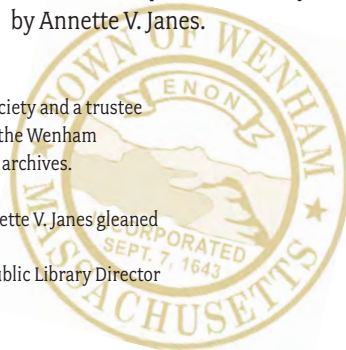
**Author Annette V. Janes** is president of Hamilton Historical Society and a trustee of Hamilton-Wenham Public Library. She wrote this book with the Wenham Museum, selecting images from the museum's extensive photo archives.

"Readers will enjoy the detailed archival photographs that Annette V. Janes gleaned from the Wenham Museum's well-preserved collection."

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Review of *C. S. Lewis's Perelandra: Reshaping the Image of the Cosmos*  
edited by Judith Wolfe and Brendan Wolfe  
(Kent, Ohio: Kent State University Press, 2013)

ROBERT E. BOENIG

*C. S. Lewis's Perelandra: Reshaping the Image of the Cosmos*, edited by Judith Wolfe and Brendan Wolfe, is a collection of ten essays (160 pp.) by various authors plus an Introduction and is, in the words of Don W. King, who endorses the book on its dust jacket, "the first book-length study of *Perelandra*." There are, of course, other book-length studies of what is commonly termed "the Ransom Trilogy," of which *Perelandra* is the second volume. But to my knowledge this book is indeed the first to focus on only one of the three novels in the trilogy. The list of contributors to *C. S. Lewis's Perelandra: Reshaping the Image of the Cosmos* is international in scope; a plurality is based in the United Kingdom, particularly Oxford, but there are also contributors from the United States, Canada, and Russia. Scholarly treatments of Lewis's fiction tend to fall into two camps—those that focus primarily on literary techniques and others that focus on theological themes. This book tilts towards the theological, but without neglecting the literary.

Judith Wolfe's Introduction, as is customary for multi-authored volumes, provides brief summaries of the various articles, explaining how they work together to form a coherent whole. It is followed by what I consider the book's jewel, Walter Hooper's "C. S. Lewis and the Anthropological Approach," in which he reminisces about the summer of 1963, when as a young man he served as Lewis's secretary. He recounts Lewis's delightful grumblings about how misdirected literary source-studies of his works tend to be—a warning to literary types (like myself) to be careful. In "Voyage to Venus: Lewis's Imaginative Path to *Perelandra*," Michael Ward descants about the theme of "plentitude" (richness, abundance) in the novel and looks at "venereal" (here meaning "oriented towards Venus as planet and goddess") themes in Lewis's other works.

In his "For the Dance All Things Were Made: The Great Dance in C. S. Lewis's *Perelandra*," Paul S. Fiddes explicates the cosmic dance that concludes *Perelandra* in terms of Neoplatonic mysticism and Trinitarian theology. Sanford Schwartz's "*Perelandra* in Its Own Time: A Modern View of the Space Trilogy" sets the novel in the context of Henri Bergson's theories about "creative evolution" and the nature of time. This contextualization is a reminder to us that the medievalist Lewis is not always turning his gaze backwards in time, but is also very much engaged with the intellectual debates of the first half of the twentieth century. Monika B. Hilder addresses Lewis's antifeminism in her "Surprised by the Feminine: A Rereading of Gender Discourse in C. S. Lewis's *Perelandra*." She suggests that Lewis critiques traditional "classical heroism," which privileges "masculine values" like "reason, autonomy, activity, aggression, and pride" with "spiritual heroism" oriented towards "feminine values of imagination, interdependence, passivity, care, and humility" (p. 70). For her, Weston represents classical heroism and Ransom spiritual heroism. In "The Center and the Rim: Inversions of the System of the Heavens in *Perelandra* and *The Discarded Image*," Nicolay Esplée looks at the novel through the lens of Lewis's scholarly explication of medieval cosmology in *The Discarded Image*.

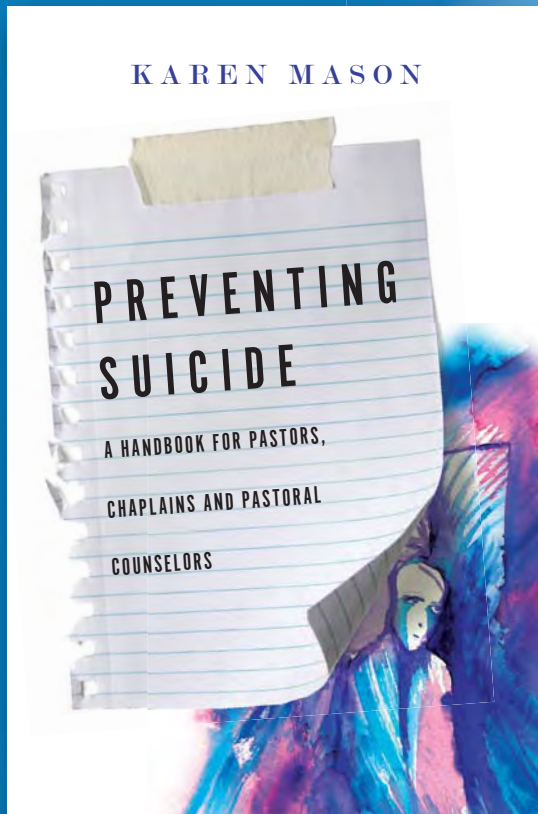
In her "Perelandran Diction: A Study in Meaning," Tami Van Opstal contextualizes *Perelandra* in terms of the speculative language theories of Lewis's friend Owen Barfield. She suggests that Lewis incorporates Barfield's ideas about the metaphorical origins of words into *Perelandra*, gently reorienting them away from Barfield's anthroposophism towards Christian orthodoxy. For Meriel Patrick in "Myth, Pluralism, and Choice: *Perelandra* and Lewis on Religious Truth," the main characters in *Perelandra* (Weston, Ransom, and Tinidril) enact a "true myth" (a reference

to the ideas that emerged from Lewis's famous late night conversation with Tolkien and Dyson that in 1931 anticipated Lewis's conversion to Christianity, one in which the two convinced Lewis that Christ's death and resurrection enacted the myth of the dying and rising god as an historical event). Unfallen Tor and Tinidril, for Patrick, experience as reality what Christians accept through faith. Bruce R. Johnson in "Frightful Freedom: *Perelandra* as Imaginative Theodicy" suggests that Ransom must learn to reject rational argumentation in favor of practical action. Johnson contextualizes Ransom's movement with Lewis's experience during World War II of speaking on religious themes to servicemen, in the Royal Air Force, who were combating evil on a practical, rather than theoretical level. Michael Travers's "Free to Fall: The Moral Ground of Events on *Perelandra*" concludes the volume with a discussion of the theme of free will and innocence in *Perelandra*.

Not only are the arguments in the individual articles in *C. S. Lewis's Perelandra: Reshaping the Image of the Cosmos* interesting and insightful, but they also work well together. Ward's word "plentitude" can be associated with this volume as well as Lewis's *Perelandra*, for the individual contributors demonstrate the abundance of ideas that come into play when we read, explicate, and learn from Lewis's great novel. When I finished the book, I found myself hoping that the other novels in the Ransom Trilogy, *Out of the Silent Planet* and *That Hideous Strength*, would soon attract editors as competent as Judith Wolfe and Brendan Wolfe to assemble essays as valuable as these.

Robert Boenig is Professor of English and Associate Head of the English Department at Texas A&M University. He earned a Ph.D. in medieval literature from Rutgers University and a M.Div. from Princeton Theological Seminary, specializing in the New Testament. The author of *Anglo-Saxon Spirituality* (Paulist Press, 2000) and co-editor (with Andrew Taylor) of the Broadview Press edition of Chaucer's *Canterbury Tales* (2008, 2012), his latest book is *C. S. Lewis and the Middle Ages* (Kent State University Press, 2012).

# Discover the Church's Role *in* Suicide Prevention



233 pages, paperback, 978-0-8308-4117-2, \$18.00

Many pastors, chaplains and pastoral counselors play a vital role as agents of hope to people who are struggling, but most of them feel overwhelmed and unprepared to prevent suicides. In this practical handbook, Karen Mason integrates theology and psychology, showing how pastoral caregivers can teach the significance of life, monitor those at risk and intervene when they need help. Discover how you and your church can be proactive in caring for those at risk of self-harm.

*"Do real Christians die by suicide? Yes. Only God knows how many. But most pastors, chaplains and pastoral counselors already know someone they could help choose living instead of dying . . . if only they knew how. If you're in that role, this book is for you. And if you're preparing for ministry this book is also for you, because there is little doubt that you are going to find yourself in this dark trysting place where death meets life more often than any of us would wish."*

**DAVID B. BIEBEL**, coauthor of *Finding Your Way After the Suicide of Someone You Love*



**KAREN MASON** (PhD, University of Denver) is associate professor of counseling and psychology at Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary and a psychologist working in the mental health field since 1990. She previously managed the Office of Suicide Prevention for the Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment and is a member of the American Psychological Association.



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## Review of *Spinning the Arrow of Time* by Ruth Hoppin (Fort Bragg, CA: Lost Coast Press, 2013)

JAMIE PARSLEY

Ruth Hoppin's latest book of poems is a hymn to creation and its Creator. And, for Hoppin, creation is not only what the poet sees, but also what is beyond seeing. This hymn of praise takes in the celestial, the atomic, and even the subatomic.

The range of this book is amazing at times. Within several pages, we go from the ends of the solar system, with the poem, "Pluto," in which we experience:

. . . the outermost bound; come see  
that to which all is progressing  
in fiery blast; in orbital path  
of planets retrogressing . . .

to the smallest subatomic particles in "The Quark," in which the "flirting" quark itself speaks:

Even here  
on the cruel frontier of science  
there is a place for the subtle influence  
I exert:  
I flirt.

*Spinning the Arrow of Time* is a book of perspective—and a perspective that often amazes. In two poems, a comet is viewed from earth:

Delinquent star  
careening around the sun  
as if to blaze  
a trail to oblivion . . .

("The Comet as Seen from Earth")

At the same time, it is viewed from celestial heights:

In empty space  
with no sure guide  
expect your daring  
you light up the sky.

("The Comet as Seen from Heaven")

The poems that make up the heart of this collection are found in section 4, "A World Beyond." This is where Hoppin's clearest and most distinct voice is heard. These devotional poems are precise and well structured, almost like well-crafted hymns. Throughout this section, we find one amazing spiritual gem after another. "Nativity I—Incarnation," for example, ends with this:

Into a world where God is not  
must God be born.

The truth in such a summation of a poem leaves its ramifications far beyond the poem and its subject. It speaks to us in this time and place, and its truth resonates long after the poem has been set aside.

The devotional poem is, beyond doubt, Hoppin's particular fort . Here, she allows herself truly to encompass the timelessness of many subjects and, still, uniquely, capture them within set time. Emerging from this subtle tension are carefully wrought words and images that not only speak clearly, but sing with melody:

We stand and wait by the empty tomb  
knowing our hearts are dark and cold  
sealed by the stone of doubt and gloom  
refusing like Mary to be consoled.  
Then we discover the One we seek  
standing beside us and hear him speak.

("Mary Waiting on Easter Morning")

Just when we think the power of faith and its place in our lives and in the realm of poetry is exhausted, Hoppin is able to present a few well-placed words and rhymes that embody spiritual truth with a uniquely fresh voice:

I look to Thee beyond whose world  
a world I see  
ever closer to the source  
of all that is and is to be.

("Ever Closer to the Source")

When all is said and done regarding her collection, together the poems transcend the meaning of the single poem from which the title of the book is found:

Words imprinted on leather scrolls  
Spirit to spirit, we pray for the souls  
Of all those learned and pious men  
And spin the arrow of time again.

("Come Spin the Arrow")

One cannot help but believe that, truly, "spirit to spirit," this poet and her poems also speak to us through that same spinning arrow of time.

Jamie Parsley is an Episcopalian priest and Associate Poet Laureate of North Dakota since 2004. His twelfth book of poems, *That Word*, was published by North Star Press.

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## AN HISTORIAN LOOKS AT 1 TIMOTHY 2:11–14

The Authentic Traditional Interpretation and Why It Disappeared

J. G. BROWN

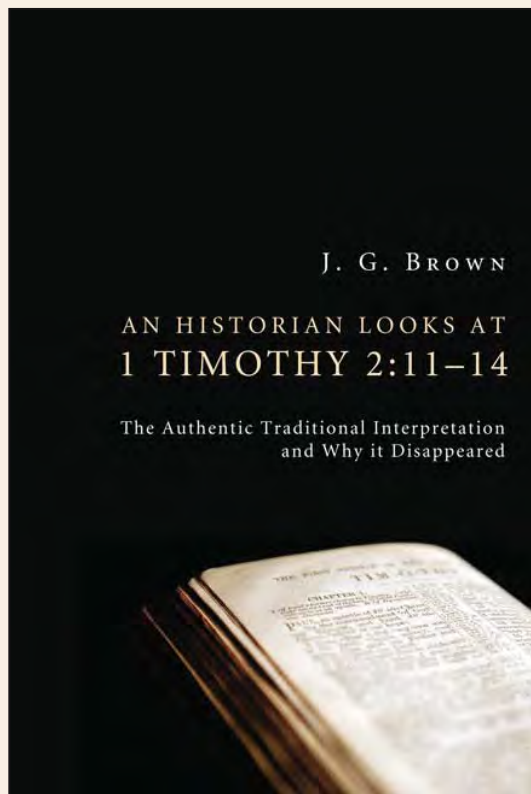
In the controversy over the role of women in the church, complementarians/hierarchists routinely claim to be upholding the “traditional” position. Like the little boy who declared that “the emperor has no clothes,” J. G. Brown exposes the fallacies in this claim. The authentic traditional interpretation of passages such as 1 Timothy 2:11–14 differs substantially from contemporary readings, whether egalitarian or hierarchist. Most prominent Protestant exegetes—from Luther and Calvin through those in the early nineteenth century—understood creation ordinances (male headship/female subordination) as foundational to the temporal world, not the church. *An Historian Looks at 1 Timothy 2:11–14* brings history and theology together in a fresh way, with startling implications for the ongoing debate.

“For years 1 Timothy 2:11–14 has been at the center of an exegetical firestorm prompted by the ongoing debate over what the Bible says about women’s place in church and society. Providing new grist for an old mill, J. G. Brown poses a bold challenge to those who appeal to the ‘traditional’ argument that complementarianism is embedded in the creational order. This invocation of tradition, Brown provocatively argues, is misguided precisely because it is historically unfounded.”

—NICHOLAS PERRIN

Franklin S. Dyrness Chair of Biblical Studies, Wheaton College

978-1-61097-600-8 / \$15 / 118 PP. / PAPER



J. G. BROWN resides in St. Louis, Missouri, and has recently retired from a career of teaching history and government on the high school and community college levels.

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## Review of *John Wesley's Teachings, Volume 1: God and Providence* by Thomas C. Oden (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2012)

JOHN P. LATHROP

*John Wesley's Teachings, Volume 1: God and Providence* (240 pp.) is the first of four volumes written by Thomas Oden to present the teachings of John Wesley (13), the Methodist leader. Wesley did not leave behind a systematic theology, so, in order to present an orderly account of his teachings, Oden has extracted Wesley's teachings on key doctrines from his homilies and his other writings. Homilies were teaching sermons that were based on a single text of Scripture (21-22). This undertaking is no small task. Wesley left behind 151 teaching homilies (15). In order to systematize Wesley's teachings, Oden has drawn heavily, for the most part, from two major collections of Wesley's writings: *The Works of John Wesley*, the Bicentennial edition and the Thomas Jackson edition (13). The book's extensive notes and footnotes inform the reader which source Oden is citing. The author states his reason for writing; he says, "I seek to make Wesley accessible to non-Wesleyans as a wise teacher of classic Christianity" (28).

It is fitting that Oden is the author of this series of books on the teachings of John Wesley for two reasons: first, because he is an ordained Methodist minister, and, second, because he has written a number of well received theology books. So, both his religious heritage and his scholastic expertise qualify him to write this book.

The book contains a preface, an introduction, nine chapters, and two appendixes. The chapter titles are: "God," "The Primacy of Scripture," "Tradition," "Reason," "Experience," "Creation, Providence, and Evil," "Man," "Sin," and "Original Sin." In each chapter, significant truths related to the main subject are discussed. For example, in the chapter, "The Primacy of Scripture," the authority and inspiration of Scripture are covered. As might be expected, an emphasis on human decision or free will is found at relevant points throughout the text.

The author has gone to great lengths to present the teachings of John Wesley accurately. In the introduction of the book, Oden tells the reader that he will focus on primary sources (26). In each chapter, texts from Wesley's writings are cited, and Oden offers further explanation of what Wesley was teaching. Oden's words serve as a commentary on Wesley's words.

I found chapter two, "The Primacy of Scripture," particularly relevant and enjoyable. Wesley had a very high view of Scripture and took a strong stance for biblical authority. A couple of quotations from him that were included in the chapter bear this out. Wesley said, "The church is to be judged by the Scripture, not the Scripture by the Church" (68). He also said, "I try every church and every doctrine by the Bible" (70). Some Methodists today, who are starting to move away from biblical authority toward theological liberalism, would do well to contemplate Wesley's words.

I also appreciated chapter five, "Experience." Wesley's views on the place of experience in the Christian life and its relationship to Scripture were interesting and informative. I also liked the section in this chapter on "The Catholic Spirit." In this section, the reader can see the openness and respect that Wesley had for Christians who did not share all of his views on matters of secondary doctrine. His counsel, though many years old, is still relevant for the church world today.

One of the extra bonuses of this book is the brief glimpses that we get of Wesley the human being. He was truly a remarkable individual. He was fluent in reading the Greek New Testament (14), knew eight languages, "Hebrew, Greek, Latin, French, German, Dutch, Spanish, and Italian," for seven of which he wrote grammars (86), and was an editor of approximately four hundred books and a publisher of books on a variety of subjects, including physics and social change (66).

One of the drawbacks of this book is that readers must discipline themselves to remember that not all the words they are reading are John Wesley's. He is certainly quoted in the book, but much of what one reads is Oden's explanations of what Wesley was saying. A good portion of the text is commentary on Wesley's words. Sometimes one forgets to distinguish them as text flows into context.

This book is rich in theology and would be useful in a number of seminary and college courses, for example, for a theology course, or one in church history, or one on revival. In addition, it might also be a good text for a Methodist polity course; it would serve as a great source of inspiration and information to those entering ministry in the Methodist denomination. It would also be useful for those who want to explore Arminian theology, contextualized and proactively applied.

John P. Lathrop is a 2003 graduate of Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary's Center for Urban Ministerial Education (CUME) (M.A. in Urban Ministry). He is an ordained minister with the International Fellowship of Christian Assemblies and has written for a number of publications. He contributed two chapters to the book *The Foundations of Faith* (Pleasant Word, 2007) and wrote the afterword for *Some Men Are Our Heroes: Stories by Women about the Men Who Have Greatly Influenced Their Lives* (Wipf & Stock, 2010). He is the author of four books *Apostles, Prophets, Evangelists, Pastors, and Teachers Then and Now* (Xulon Press, 2008), *The Power and Practice of the Church: God, Discipleship, and Ministry* (J. Timothy King, 2010), *Answer the Prayer of Jesus: A Call for Biblical Unity* (Wipf & Stock, 2011), and *Dreams & Visions: Divine Interventions in Human Experience* (J. Timothy King, 2012). He is also co-editor of the book *Creative Ways to Build Christian Community* (Wipf & Stock, 2013).



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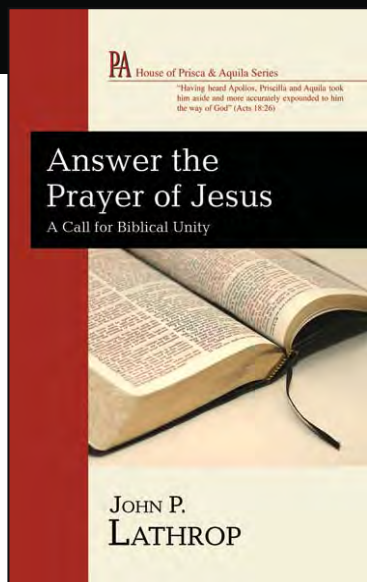
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978-1-60899-392-5 / \$16 / 128 pp. / paper

JOHN P. LATHROP is a graduate of Zion Bible College and Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary. He is an ordained minister with the International Fellowship of Christian Assemblies and the author of two other books, *Apostles, Prophets, Evangelists, Pastors, and Teachers Then and Now* (2008) and *The Power and Practice of the Church: God, Discipleship, and Ministry* (2010).

“I would recommend this book, written so thoughtfully, to everybody who desires to become part of the answer to the prayer of the Lord Jesus Christ for Christian unity. Unless we all take his appeal to heart and become pro-active in building unity, we will not have the joy of helping to answer the prayer of our Saviour.”

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—ELDIN VILLAFANE, Professor of Christian Social Ethics, Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary, and author of *Beyond Cheap Grace*

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